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# Horace

Quintus Horatius Flaccus









Nec tua laudabis studia aut aliena reprendes,  
Nec, cum venari volet ille, poemata panges.

Ep. 1, 18

Do not praise your own pursuits or censure those of your friend;  
And if he wishes to hunt, do not insist on scribbling verses.

# Horace: Quintus Horatius Flaccus

*"Crescam laude recens"*

The Letters of Horace Presented  
to Modern Readers

*Edited by*  
*Charles Loomis Dana and John Cotton Dana*

The Elm Tree Press Woodstock Vermont  
1911

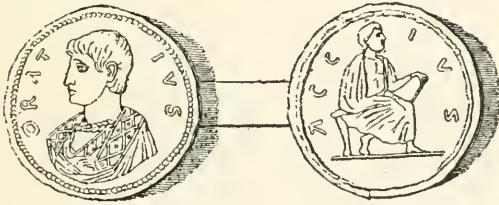
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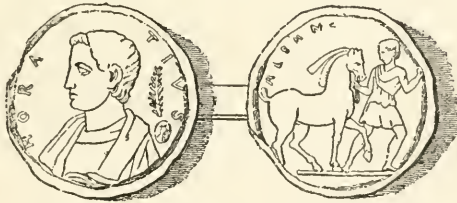


Horace, from a medal of about the fourth century. The figure on the reverse is that of the poet Accius, to whose "famous trimeters" Horace alludes in the Art of Poetry.



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Horace, from a medal of about the fourth century.







HORACE: A MEDAL OF ABOUT THE FOURTH CENTURY, PROBABLY BASED ON A PORTRAIT BUST IN EXISTENCE AT THAT TIME. THE REVERSE OF THIS MEDAL, SHOWN ON ANOTHER PAGE, BEARS A FIGURE OF THE POET ACCIUS.



## INTRODUCTION

Such was Horace, an author of much civility; and (if any one among the heathen can be) the best master both of virtue and wisdom; an excellent and true judge upon cause and reason; not because he thought so, but because he knew so, out of use and experience.

*Ben Jonson in "Discoveries."*

Horace is the most popular and after Virgil perhaps the most esteemed of Latin writers. His letters it is agreed are the most interesting and most characteristic portion of his work. They do not represent the highest type of his poetic art, but they best reveal his personality and his philosophy of life. They were drawn upon more than the Odes and Satires by the older writers who published *emblemata* and quoted his moralities. These letters, however, are not interesting in English as generally presented. The poetic translations, even the most skilful and conscientious, do not make good poetry, or tell the story satisfactorily. There have been no prose translations so far as we can find which make the letters easy or attractive reading.

But there is so much merit in the material, that it seems possible to present it in a way which may interest the modern public; at any event we have thought the attempt worth while.

This does not mean that we have tried to put the text into superior English or to adorn and uplift it with the devices of literary art. This is not needed in order to make a letter of Horace's readable and understandable. The effort rather has

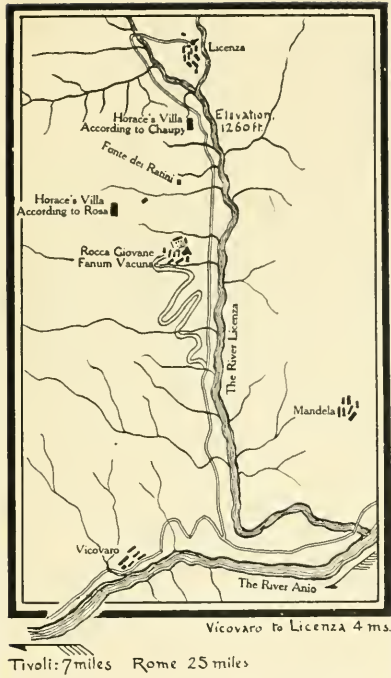
been to give the facts regarding the personality of the people to whom the writings are addressed; to tell of the time and occasion of writing and supply the local, historical and mythological references, also to keep the thread of the story and show the connection of the reasoning.

All this has been done in the notes of various learned editors, from Orelli, Dacier and MacLeane to Wilkin. But a combination of these data with a somewhat embellished English translation has not heretofore been attempted. It is impossible to follow the connection and meaning of Horace in these days without here and there extending the text and interpolating explanations. To the ordinary translation there must be some additions. With these and using as a basis a standard translation we hope to give to the Letters a certain modernity and life.

Horace's philosophy does not require much text and he often repeats his views to the point of being tiresome,—when stripped of his art. Hence it has seemed best to publish, at first at least, only a portion of the letters, selecting those generally esteemed as the best and most representative.

To the modern reader we feel sure there will develop some interest in the work for reasons other than the merit of the lines.

Here is the picture of an amiable pagan striving earnestly to find out the meaning of life. His efforts are so persistent, so sincere, so full of art, but yet in such narrow range that they seem in a way pathetic. His views are to us now almost puerile in their simplicity. Yet he uses his ethical ideals seriously in an effort to fight the corruption of the day and build up better citizens. He attacks with simple morality exactly the same vices we are combating now with all the forces of philosophy, religion, education and hygiene. After all, Horace's philosophy would be enough if he were to add to it the idealism and higher religious feelings of to-day.



VALLEY OF THE LICENZA, THE DIGENTIA OF HORACE'S DAY, SHOWING THE SITES OF HORACE'S VILLA ACCORDING TO CHAUPY AND ACCORDING TO ROSA.

The photographs reproduced elsewhere in this book were taken on the assumption that Horace's villa was at the site according to Chaupy.



Another thing which must interest the modern reader is the fact that such moral essays, parables, and preachings as those of Horace were sent to prominent men of the day; the Emperor, his ministers, great lawyers and men of affairs, were apparently glad to receive verse telling them to be good, to avoid avarice, to give up ambition, to be honest and faithful to their friends, to lead a modest life.

Such things are sent out to-day from the pulpit; but who among our poets would dare address a minister of state in personal hexameters telling him that the first step toward wisdom is to avoid folly? There was a living interest in poetry and ethics among the ancient Romans, or great Augustus would not have felt hurt that he himself did not get an epistle showing how persons ought to behave.

Finally, as in his Satires and Odes, Horace in his Letters reveals often his own character and habits and history; so that all of them sooner or later has some touch which awakens the reader.

We trust that some of these things will be found and appreciated by the modern reader of the letters of our immortal Augustan.

#### THE SABINE FARM

Horace was living at his home in the Sabine valley during a large portion of the time in which he wrote his letters. He wrote at least one of them from this region. He describes it in another letter (XVI); and he discusses the morals of rural life with his steward in Epistle XIV.

So much of his philosophy and his happiness depended on or were interwoven with his Sabine life that we have felt justified in presenting this particular background to our readers in some detail. We shall not enter into the discussion, sometimes acrimonious, of the discovery and early description of the region; but pass at once to the modern situation.

Most visitors to Rome travel up to Tivoli, called Tibur in Augustan times, to see the Baths of Hadrian, and what is called the villa of Horace. It is doubtful if Horace ever really had a house at Tivoli, but he stayed there often as the guest of Maecenas.

About twelve miles above Tivoli is the Sabine region, where he had his farm and his country home. The river Digentia runs through the valley and empties into the Anio.

In the summer of 1910 we obtained the services of Signor Loescher of Rome who sent a photographer to the Sabine Valley. He uncovered and photographed the long-buried mosaic pavement of the supposed villa of Horace, and obtained other views of the more familiar points, some of which are reproduced here. There are no other photographs of modern views of this region so far as we can find; though there are a good many old engravings which reproduced it, somewhat idealized, as it appeared one hundred years ago.\*

In September, 1842, Mr. G. Dennis visited the Sabine Farm and wrote a very charming description of his investigations of the spot. His letter addressed to the Rev. Henry Hart Milman is published in Milman's well-known edition of Horace's works. Mr. Dennis's description fits in so well with the photographic views which we have obtained of the valley of the Digentia that we venture to insert it here :

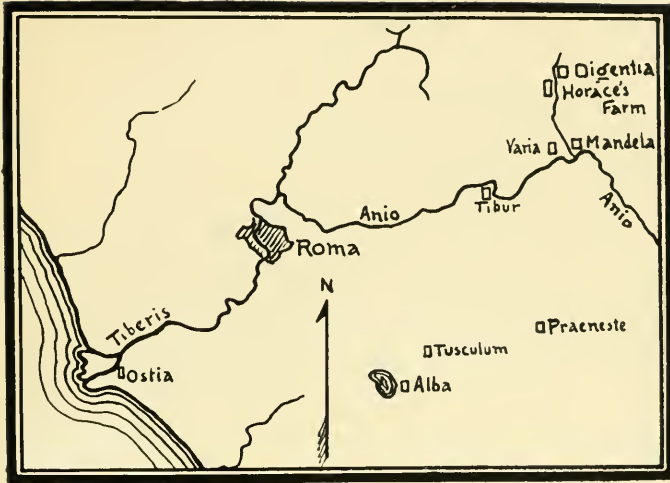
"If you follow the banks of the Anio, eight miles above Tivoli you reach Vico Varo—the Varia mentioned by the poet as in the neighborhood of his Farm, and probably at that time the nearest town.

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*            \*

"It is now a small place, standing on a steep rock, overhanging the road, and still preserving fragments of its ancient walls of rectangular masonry. You presently leave the Anio, and enter

\* The Italian government is again investigating this region.





SKETCH MAP OF THE COUNTRY FROM THE  
MEDITERRANEAN TO HORACE'S FARM. SCALE,  
ABOUT 16 MILES TO THE INCH.



a valley which opens to the north. On a height which rises to the right stand two villages, Cantalupo and Bardela; the latter is supposed to be the Mandela, which the poet describes as *rugosus frigore pagus*; and, certes, it stands in an airy position, at the point of junction of the two valleys. You soon come to a small stream, of no remarkable character, but it is the Digentia, the *gelidus rivus*, at which the poet was wont to slake his thirst—*me quoties reficit*—and which flows away through the meadows to the foot of the said hill of Bardela—*quem Mandela bibit*. You are now in the Sabine valley, so fondly loved and highly prized.

Cur valle permutem Sabina  
Divitias operosiores?

Why would I exchange burdensome riches for my Sabine valley.

"A long lofty ridge forms the left-hand barrier of the valley. It is Lucretilis. Sir John Hobhouse says it is now called Campanile—but every peasant will point you out "Lucretile." It has no striking features to attract the eye—with its easy swells, undulating outline, and slopes covered with wood, it well merits the title of *amaenus*, though that was doubtless due to its grateful shade, rather than to its appearance. Ere long you espy, high up beneath the brow of the mountain, a village perched on a precipitous grey cliff. It is Rocca Giovane, now occupying the site of the ruined temple of Vacuna, of which more anon.

"Five or six miles up this valley bring you to the foot of a conical height, on which stands the said town of Licenza; while still loftier heights tower behind, from which the village of Civitella, apparently inaccessible, looks down on the valley like an eagle from its eyrie. In the foreground a knoll crested with chestnuts, rising some eighty or hundred feet above the stream, marks the site of the much-sung Farm.

"This knoll stands at the bend of the stream, or rather at the point where several rivulets unite to form the Digentia. Behind

the knoll stood the Farm. A few remains of brick wall, a scattered fragment or two of columns, not of marble or other foreign materials, but of ordinary travertine, and a small piece of mosaic pavement, mark the exact site.

Non ebur neque aureum  
 Mea renidet in domo lacunar ;  
 Non trabes Hymettiae  
 Premunt columnas ultima recisas  
 Africa.

Nor gold nor ivory inlaid,  
 Nor cedars from Hymettus torn,  
 Nor Libyan marble colonnades  
 My humble home adorn.

" The Farm is situated on a rising ground, which sinks with a gentle slope to the stream, leaving a level intervening strip, now yellow with the harvest. In this I recognize the *pratium apricum* which was in danger of being overflowed. The *aprica rura* were probably then, as now, sown with corn—*purae rivus aquae, et segetis certa fides meae*. Here it must have been that the poet was wont to repose after his meal: *prope rivum somnus in herba*; and here his personal efforts, perhaps, to dam out the stream, provoked his neighbors to a smile."

Rident vicini glebas et saxa moventem.

#### ROME AT THE TIME OF THE EPISTLES

At the time of the writing of most of Horace's letters, B. C. 27 to B. C. 19, the Empire of Rome was in a state of comparative peace.

Octavianus, having destroyed Rome's last formidable enemy, Egypt, had poured the treasures of that country into Italy. He had made himself Proconsul, Princeps, Imperator, and Augustus and he practically held everything in his own hand. Because he was Proconsul, he was lord of all the provinces, and as Imperator, he had complete command of the army. Incidentally, he was the richest man in the world. He could, therefore, safely



VIEW OF LICENZA FROM THE VINEYARD IN WHICH IS THE MOSAIC PAVEMENT ON THE SUPPOSED SITE OF HORACE'S HOUSE.



leave Rome, where there was no army, and stay in Spain or in the East with his troops, and this is what he did a good part of the period in question. While thus occupied, he fought the Cantabrians in Spain and secured some temporary victories; but was taken ill and returned to Rome; to be cured by Antonius Musa.

He sent his stepson Tiberius to the East to conquer Armenia. Later, he himself went to the East and proceeded to reorganize the governments of Greece, Asia Minor and Egypt. He made certain important but unduly magnified conquests in Asia Minor.

It was about this time, B. C. 29, when he was only thirty-four years of age, that the Temple of Janus was closed. It was during this period that he attempted to reform the morals and manners of the Romans, enacting laws to encourage marriage and increase the birth-rate, and trying to renew among the citizens of Rome the old feelings of patriotism and reverence for the gods and the ancient customs. He was not very successful.

The Romans were still passionately attached to their aristocracy and the belief was general that only the nobility could manage public affairs. So Augustus recalled the historical aristocracy to power and helped many of them with money as well as offices.

During the third decade B. C. there were no great military events, but the Cantabrians in Spain were finally conquered and Phraates, King of Armenia, restored to the Romans the standards that had been taken from them a quarter of a century before. The Emperor's favorite nephew, Marcellus, died in this decade, and Augustus united his fortunes more firmly with that of his great general, Agrippa, by giving him his daughter Julia, widow of Marcellus, in marriage.

The period then was one of great activity in the reorganization of the dependencies of Rome, and also in attempts at social and administrative reform among the citizens of Rome themselves.

The period of Horace's letter-writing was also one of great literary activity. Associated with three great patrons of the Muses, Pollio, Messala and Maecenas, were groups of major and minor poets, as well as of rhetoricians, orators and writers of history. Virgil (70 B. C.-19 B. C.) finished his *Aeneid*; Tibullus (B. C. 55-B. C. 19) and Propertius (B. C. 50-B. C. 16) wrote their elegies; Ovid had begun his career (B. C. 43-A. D. 17) and Livy (B. C. 59-A. D. 17) was writing his history. The custom of reciting compositions to an audience of friends had been introduced by Pollio. Libraries and book-shops were established and books were plentiful and fashionable. There were many minor poets and historians, some good like Gallus and Varius, and many bad, and satirized by the successful. The discussion of philosophy, and especially of ethical philosophy, the celebration of great men and great deeds, the satire of folly, and the praise of love were the themes on which, except the last, Horace touched.

In dramatic art alone there were no great things being done. Pompey had built a permanent theatre B. C. 59 and the Greek and old Roman tragedies more or less modernized were presented. There was an attempt to create a Roman drama and Horace in his *Ars Poetica* shows his interest in the development of this form of literary art. But the great names of the Roman stage, Ennius, Accius, Plautus, and Terence were of the past. The comedy of Terence had degenerated; coarse farces, cheap vaudeville shows became popular and finally came mimes and pantomimes in which the stage reached its lowest level. All these were still very popular in the Augustan period, and were often referred to by Horace.

His letters are mostly concerned with the philosophy of life, with encouragements to right living, the praise of moderation, the danger of wealth, the unhappiness due to great responsibilities. He writes also notes of invitation, of introduction and of friendship.





PART OF A MOSAIC PAVEMENT ON THE  
SUPPOSED SITE OF HORACE'S HOUSE.

Excavated and photographed for this book.



He discusses literary subjects, and in his art of poetry lays down rules which have received the approval of succeeding ages. The only really humorous letter is his good-bye to his book.

Throughout his letters are many wise sayings and unimpeachable moralities; more proportionately than in any of his other works. The compiler of the *Emblemata* of Horace, Vaenius, Antwerp 1612, drew a great number of his illustrations from the *Epistles* and we have reproduced some of these. As we have stated in our former book, they represent Roman life from the standpoint of the Dutch craftsmen of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. And they may give the impression that Horace was very serious and rather preachy as a letter-writer. This is not quite true; most of the letters are short and none contain subtle problems or complicated philosophy. They do not tax the mind. The modern reader will probably say they are very dull. Yet they are not; though perhaps the only convincing proof of this is obtained by consulting the Latin text.





MOUNT LUCRETILIS, NOW MONTE GENNARO, LOOKING ACROSS THE LICENZA.  
THE SUPPOSED SITE OF HORACE'S HOUSE IS MARKED WITH A CROSS.

From a photograph taken for this book.



## TO MAECENAS

### THE FIRST LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

This letter was written to serve to some extent as an introduction to the first book of Epistles. Horace had published his three books of Odes and had apparently decided not to do any more work of that kind. Maecenas, however, urged him to continue, and he now protests against this plea, though later he yielded and published a fourth book of Odes.

The letter was written B. C. 20, when Horace was about 45 years of age. "In this Epistle," says Davidson, "Horace discovers the same fine taste, as a Philosopher, that he does as a Poet. Of all the parts of Philosophy, morality was his chief Study because every other part comparatively speaking is but an idle speculation and fruitless curiosity. . . The Poet concludes the letter with a satirical Reflection on the Stoicks, to which the Surprize gives a great deal of Wit and Beauty. In short this piece is full of sprightly and pathetic Turns of excellent Morality."

Prima dicte mihi, summa dicende Camena,  
Spectatum satis et donatum iam rude quaeris,  
Maecenas, iterum antiquo me includere ludo.

You were the subject, Maecenas, of my earliest songs and you will be the theme of my latest; but now you ask me, a poet sufficiently approved and holding the badge of retirement, again to enter the old game.

My age is not the same, nor my inclination.

Non eadem est aetas, non mens.

Vejanus, the Gladiator, was allowed to fix his arms on the Temple of Hercules and go to his country

The gladiator, when he retired, received a wooden foil as badge of his discharge.

home, so that he need not so often beg the favor of the people from the edge of the arena. A voice sounds in my alert ears : " Spare the old horse in time lest he fail at last and they laugh at his panting flanks."

So now I am laying aside poetry and such trifles and am seeking and asking after what is true and becoming; and this takes all my time. I am storing

Quid verum atque decens curo et rogo et omnis in  
hoc sum ;

up and arranging what I may be able to publish.

The Stoic  
doctrine was  
that virtue  
should be  
active.

If you should ask to what master or what school I am attached; I would answer that I have taken oath

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri,

to no one and that wherever the storms drive me, there I take my lodging. Sometimes I become active, and am immersed in the waves of civic affairs and am a guardian and rigid follower of the honest life.

Aristippus  
regarded bodily  
gratification of  
the present  
moment as the  
highest pleasure  
and wisdom.

Again, I slip back almost insensibly into the doctrines of Aristippus, and try to make circumstances suit me rather than suit myself to circumstances.

Et mihi res, non me rebus subjungere conor.

This is what  
is known as  
Horatian  
persiflage.

As the night seems long to him whose mistress disappoints him; as the day seems long to those who are forced to hard tasks; as the year passes slowly to children under the charge of nagging mothers, so to me irksomely and slowly the seasons flow which





Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator :  
Nemo adeo ferus est, ut non mitescere possit,  
Si modo culturae patientem commodet aurem.  
Ep. I, I

Coward, pickthank, spitfire, drunkard, debauchee,  
Submit to culture patiently, you'll find  
Her charms can humanize the rudest mind.  
*Conington*



delay the fulfilment of my hope and my resolution ;  
to discover that plan of life which, if followed, will  
be of advantage alike to the rich and the poor, and,  
if neglected, will be harmful alike to the young and  
the old !

Aequae pauperibus prodest, locupletibus aequae,  
Aequae neglectum pueris senibusque nocebit.

At present it stands thus ; that I regulate and console  
myself with these general principles :

Horace begins  
to moralize ;  
addressing now  
the reader, not  
Maecenas.

Although you cannot be as sharp of sight as  
Lynceus, yet you will not on that account neglect such  
eyes as you have or fail to have them cared for if  
inflamed.

Non possis oculo quantum contendere Lynceus :  
Non tamen idcirco contemnas lippus inungui ;

Lynceus, one of  
the Argonauts,  
was famous for  
his keen vision.

And because you despair of possessing the strength of  
the unconquered Glycon, you will not be averse to  
saving yours limbs from the knotty gout. There is a  
certain moderate degree of philosophy to which one  
may attain, even if one is not permitted to go further.

Glycon was a  
famous  
contemporary  
athlete.

Est quadam prodire tenus, si non datur ultra.

Is your breast inflamed with avarice or a wretched  
passion ? There are words and voices by which you  
can soften this pain and relieve in great measure the  
disease.

Sunt verba et voces quibus hunc lenire dolorem  
Possis et magnam morbi deponere partem.

4            *Horace: Quintus Horatius Flaccus*

Are you swollen with love of praise? There are certain remedies of philosophy which will have power to restore you; the wise book being read three times over with good intent. One may be jealous, irritable, indolent, intemperate, sensual, yet he is still not so savage that he cannot be tamed if he but lend a patient ear to culture.

Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator,  
Nemo adeo ferus est, ut non mitescere possit,  
Si modo culturæ patientem commodet aurem.

The first principle of goodness is to flee from vice, and the beginning of wisdom is to be free from folly.

Virtus est vitium fugere et sapientia prima  
Stultitia caruisse.

See with how much toil of mind and body you try to avoid such things as you think are great evils: a small income, or a shameful defeat at the polls. As a merchant you tirelessly travel to the furthest Indies, flying over seas and rocks and through fire to escape poverty; and do you not wish, then, to listen and learn, and to trust to a wiser man so that you may cease to care for those things which now you foolishly admire and covet?

What village or county-fair athlete would disdain to be crowned at the great Olympiad, if he had the hope, the sweet assurance, that he would gain without toil

that pleasant palm of victory? Yet this victory over your own evil self the wise man offers you.

Silver is cheaper than gold, gold than virtue. "O citizens!" you cry; "money must be sought first; after money, virtue!"

Horace takes another text.

"O cives, cives, quaerenda pecunia primum est;  
Virtus post nummos."

The philosopher, Phocylides, taught that one should first get enough to live upon, and then acquire virtue.

This is the doctrine held from one end of Janus to the other, and these maxims are sung over and over by youths and old men, like school-boys with their satchels and tablets hung from the left arm. Though you may have spirit, character, eloquence and credit, if you lack three or four hundred dollars of the twenty thousand which would make you a knight, you will have to remain a common man.

Before a Roman plebeian could be a knight he had to possess 400,000 sesterces.

But the boys sing at their play, "Do right and you'll be King!" Let this rather be your wall of brass, to feel no guilt within, no fault to turn you pale.

. . . Hic murus æneus esto:  
Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa.

Tell me, please, which is better: the Roscian Law, or the Children's Ditty which gives reward to those who act well—a ditty sung of old by the brave Romans, Curius and Camillus?

The Roscian law gave the first fourteen rows in the theatre to the knights. The Senators were always provided for in the orchestra.

And who now is the better adviser, he who says: "Make your fortune; make it honestly if you can, but if you can't, make it anyway; so that you can

6 *Horace : Quintus Horatius Flaccus*

afford to have a better seat at the theatre and a closer view of the tearful tragedies of Puppianus"; or he who, ever at your side, exhorts and trains you to confront the petulance of fortune like a free and courageous man.

Horace cannot accept the prevalent view of life.

If now by chance the good people of Rome ask me why I do not enjoy the same sentiments which they feel, just as I enjoy their streets and public walks, and why I do not seek or avoid what they love or hate; I answer as once did the cautious fox to the sick lion: "Because the footprints alarm me, all lead to you, none lead away!"

. . . "Quia me vestigia terrent,  
Omnia te adversum spectantia, nulla retrorsum."

Fortune hunting much prevailed in Rome.

You are indeed, citizens, a monster of many heads; which one of you shall I follow and where? Some are eager to get state contracts; some pay their court with trinkets and fruits to wealthy widows, or hunt for rich old men to put into their nets: many grow rich by secret usury. Admitting, indeed, that different people must have different interests and pursuits, still, can these same people, I ask, continue for an hour liking the same things?

Baiae was a favorite sea-side resort of rich Romans. The Lucrine Lake was near it.

"No region in the world out-shines delightful Baiae." So speaks the Rich Man, and Lake and Sea feel at once the zeal of the master hurrying to build a palace there. If now some morbid whim siezes him, "Tomorrow," he says, "workmen, you will carry

your tools to Teanum and we will build a house there." Is a man married? He says; "Give me a bachelor's life, there is nothing like it." If he is not, he swears that married people alone are happy. With what noose can I hold this Proteus thus ever changing his shape?

Teanum was an inland town of Campania about 30 miles from Baiae.

So much for the rich. What about the poor man? You smile; but he is just as bad. He, too, changes his lodgings and his beds, his baths and his barbers; in his hired boat he is just as sea-sick as the rich man who sails in his own yacht.

. . . conducto navigio aequè  
Nauseat ac locuples, quem ducit priva triremis.

If I meet you Maecenas with my hair badly cut you laugh; and if by chance I wear a worn-out shirt under my new tunic, or if my toga hangs unevenly, again you smile. But what attention do you pay to me when my judgment is at war with itself, when I dislike what I have been working for, or seek again what I have just thrown away; when I am tossed to and fro and am out of joint with all the arrangements of life, and pull down, build up, and make square round and round square? In this case, you think it nothing but the ordinary madness of life; you do not laugh or think I need a physician or guardian assigned by a praetor. Although you are the safeguard of my fortunes, yet you get angry over trifles like an ill-pared nail, with the friend who so admires and depends upon you!

Maecenas criticizes Horace if wrong in his dress; but thinks nothing of it if Horace is wrong in his mind.



8 *Horace : Quintus Horatius Flaccus*

To conclude : The man of wisdom is only less than  
Jove himself ; he possesses riches, freedom, honor,  
beauty ; in fine, he is a king of kings ; and above all  
he is a sane philosopher,—except when he has a  
cold in his head !

This is said to  
be a joke at  
the expense of  
the Stoics.

*Ad summam, sapiens uno minor est Jove, dives,  
Liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum,  
Praecipue sanus, nisi cum pituita molesta est.*



## TO LOLLIUS MAXIMUS

### THE SECOND LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

With Homer's stories of the Trojan War and of the Wanderings of Ulysses as texts Horace here talks of the virtue of self-control and its rewards; of the slight value of worldly possessions compared with health of mind and body, and of early training in right conduct.

Lollius Maximus, to whom the letter is addressed, was a young man who had served in the army under Augustus. When this letter was written he was in Rome studying oratory. He wrote another epistle to him about three years later, which showed that Lollius was ambitious to enter political life and live among the great. The date of this letter is 23 B. C. when Horace was forty-two.

Trojani belli scriptorem, Maxime Lolli,  
Dum tu declamas Romæ, Præneste relegi.

While you are studying and declaiming at Rome, Dear Lollius, I am here at Præneste, reading once more the stories of the Trojan War and of the Wanderings of Ulysses. Their author shows us more skillfully and more clearly than do those diffuse moralists, Chrysippus and Crantor, what manner of life is worthy, what base, what helpful and what harmful. Unless you've something else to do, listen and I'll tell you why I think so.

The story of the long-continued conflict between Greeks and Trojans on account of the love affair of Paris, tells of the quarrels of foolish kings and foolish peoples.

Præneste was a town in Latium about sixteen miles from Rome.

Chrysippus was one of the greatest of the Stoics; Crantor a follower of Plato.

10      *Horace: Quintus Horatius Flaccus*

Antenor of Troy urges that peace be gained by surrendering Helen, the cause of the war. What does Paris do? He foolishly refuses peace on such terms even though it would make his rule safe and his life happy.

Nestor is eager to quiet the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon; but love in the latter and anger in both still keep their enmity alive. The leaders of the Greeks give way to their passions, their followers pay the penalty.

*Quicquid delirant reges, plectunter Achivi.*

Within and without the walls of Troy, treachery, deceit, crime, lust and evil passions are loose among men.

Horace begins  
his sermon. To show us, next, what courage and self-control can do, the poet sets before us the story of Ulysses; and tells how he, having subdued Troy, visits many cities and studies their customs; and while he strives for a safe return for himself and his companions, endures calmly many hardships and remains undaunted in the face of perils that threaten to overwhelm him. He

*. . . adversis rerum immersabilis undis,*

would not yield to the song of the Sirens; he refused the wine of Circe which would have made him, had he drunk it as did his foolish and greedy companions, the senseless slave in hideous form of a harlot mistress, and compelled him to the life of a filthy dog, or of a hog delighting in the mire.



Et ni

Posces ante diem librum cum lumine, si non  
Intendes animum studiis et rebus honestis,  
Invidia vel amore vigil torquebere.

Ep. 1, 2

Unless you light your lamp ere dawn and read  
Some wholesome book that high resolves may breed,  
You'll find your sleep go from you, and will toss  
Upon your pillow, envious, lovesick, cross.

*Conington*



*The Second Letter of the First Book* 11

We men today, we are born only to swell the census! and live only to consume what the earth

Nos numerus sumus et fruges consumere nati,

provides! We are like the idle suitors of Penelope; we are useless drones; and, like the young companions of that luxurious prince Alcinous, we pamper our bodies and boast that we can sleep till mid-day and then call on music to help prolong our slumbers!

Horace points  
the moral.

Bandits, forsooth, arise from sleep in the middle of the night that they may cut the throats of honest men; and will not you arouse yourself even to save your own life? Well, if you will not live wisely while health remains, be sure that you will hasten to be wise when the dropsy seizes you.

And what is true of the body is true also of the soul; for, if you do not wake early, and call for a light and a book, and set your mind to studious work and on wholesome thoughts, you will toss sleeplessly, tormented by evil ideas and passions.

Tell me, why are you so anxious to remove from your eyes something which may hurt them, yet are so ready to put off, year after year, the mending of your morals?

Come, come, my friend, well begun is half done. Dare to live wisely, begin.

Dimidium facti, qui coepit, habet : sapere aude ;  
Incipe.

A man who continually awaits that favorable day when he will begin to live rightly is like the stupid peasant who stood on the bank waiting till the stream he would cross had all run by! And the stream runs on and on, and will never cease to run.

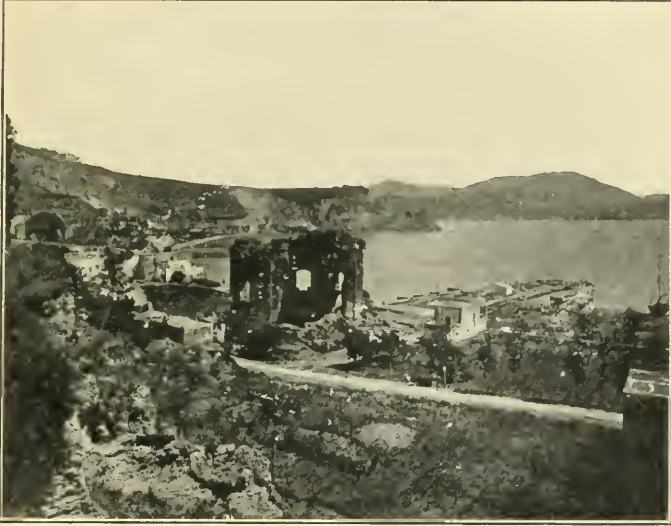
Rusticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille  
Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis aevum.

Do you say, Men are eager to get money; they want a rich wife to be the mother of their children; they are keen to buy land and then to turn its virgin forests into cultivated fields? But after all, enough is enough, and he who has enough is wise if he does not ask for more. A house, a farm, and a store of gold, these never drove the fever from their owner's aching body, or took the burden of care from his mind. Verily, the man of wealth must have good health if he would enjoy the fruit of all his labors.

If a man is bound by greed or harassed by fears, his house, his home and all his possessions will give him no more pleasure than paintings do the blind, warm blankets the feverish or music the deaf. In an unclean pitcher sweet milk soon turns sour.

Sincerum est nisi vas, quodcumque infundis acescit.

And so I say, take your pleasures easily; for bought at the cost of health of mind or body they are not worth the price.



BAIA, THE BAIÆ OF HORACE'S DAY.

From a recent photograph.

"Nullus in orbis sinus Bais praelucet amoenis,"  
Si dixit Dives.

"No bay in all the world so sweet, so fair,  
As may with Baïæ," Dives cries, "compare!"

Martin. Ep. I, 2





*The Second Letter of the First Book* 13

The covetous man is always lamenting over what he lacks. Then set a limit to your desires. The envious man is forever sick at the sight of others richer than

*Semper avarus eget : certum voto pete finem.*

he; the Tyrants of Sicily never invented a worse torment than envy provides for those who indulge in it.

And as for anger, the man who does not control it will wish he had never done the deed which indignation, wrath, and a thirst for vengeance urged him to commit. Anger is a short-lived madness.

*Ira furor brevis est :*

Govern your temper. It is your master if it is not your slave. Hold it with the bit; yes, fasten it with chains.

*. . . animum rege ; qui nisi paret,  
Imperat :*

A trainer teaches a horse, while still a young and tractable colt, to mind the rein and turn as his master wishes. The hunting dog begins his work in the woods from the day when he knows enough to bark at a deer-skin in the courtyard. And you, while you are young and your heart still clean, learn the sayings of the wise and choose the best men for your companions.

The jar long holds the odor of the wine which first filled it.

*Quo semel est inbuta recens, servabit odorem  
Testa diu.*

14      *Horace : Quintus Horatius Flaccus*

I am done with preaching, so farewell. Remember always that if you lag behind in the race of life, or if, in your zeal, you outstrip all others, I am not with you. I am for the golden mean, and I do not wait for the slow or tread on the heels of the swift.



Dimidium facti qui coepit habet : sapere aude ;  
Incipe : qui recte vivendi prorogat horam,  
Rusticus expectat dum defluat annis : at ille  
Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis aevum.

Ep. I, 2

Come now, have courage to be wise : begin :  
You're halfway over when you once plunge in :  
He who puts off the time for mending, stands  
A clodpoll by the stream with folded hands,  
Waiting till all the water be gone past ;  
But it runs on, and will, while time shall last.

*Conington*



## TO JULIUS FLORUS

### THE THIRD LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

Horace wrote this letter from Rome, B. C., 20, when he was 45 years of age. Julius Florus was one of the young nobles whom Tiberius, afterward Emperor, gathered about him. Tiberius was at this time in the East where he had been sent by Augustus to place Tigranes on the throne of Armenia. Florus traveled with him, as did other young men, among them Titius, and Celsus and Munatius who are referred to in the text. This letter, as Wilkins says, gives us a pleasant conception of the literary tastes of the companions of Tiberius, and a charming picture of the relations of Horace with the younger aspirants to poetic fame.

We know little about Florus or his companions. He had literary tastes and wrote some satires, but he does not appear to have achieved any great success. His friend Titius was apparently an ambitious poet, who was trying to adapt the style of Pindar to Latin measures. Celsus was a friend of Horace, to whom he wrote a clever letter of introduction to Tiberius. Epis. 1, 8.

Munatius was the son of a consul and later a consul himself. Horace must have had a special intimacy with Florus, for he wrote a long letter to him again a few years later. Epis. 11, 2.

Juli Flore, quibus terrarum militet oris  
Claudius Augusti privignus, scire laboro.

I am anxious to know, Florus, in what part of the world Tiberius is carrying on the war. Are you in Thrace, or by the frozen Hebrus or the Hellespont, or are you already on Asia's fertile plains and hills?

Tell me what you are all writing.† Who is going to

tell the great deeds of Augustus? Who is going to spread the story of his wars and terms of peace to a distant age?

And Titius, whose name will soon be in everyone's mouth, who is not afraid to drink at the Pindaric Spring, scorning the common lakes and streams,— is he well? And does he remember me? Is he busy

Pindarici fontis qui non expalluit haustus,  
Fastidire lacus et rivos ausus apertos?

adapting Pindar's strain to Latin verses, and is his Muse propitious? Or does he rage and swell in tragic measures?

In B. C. 28 Augustus built a Temple to Apollo on the Palatine and added to it a portico with a library.

And what is my friend Celsus doing? He has often been warned, you know, to do some work of his own and to keep his hands off the books in the Palatine Library, lest some day he be found out, and, like the bird stripped of her borrowed plumes, become a laughing-stock.

And what are you yourself attempting? Around what beds of thyme are you flitting? You have no small talent, talent which has been well trained and

Quae circumvolitas agilis thyma? Non tibi parvom  
Ingenium, non incultum est et turpiter hirtum:

never neglected. Whether you apply it in sharp contests at the bar, or in making laws, or in composing a charming song, you always carry off the victor's crown of ivy. If you can forego the cold fomentations of Care, you will surely reach the goal toward which

The Cold fomentations of Care are ambition, love of money, etc.

heavenly wisdom leads ; to do this, indeed, we should all, the small as well as the great, always strive ;— that is, if we wish to be true to our country and well satisfied with ourselves.

Quodsi  
Frigida curarum fomenta relinquere posses,  
Quo te caelestis sapientia duceret, ires.

Tell me, also, whether you are still at odds with Munatius. Alas ! Hot blood and inexperience in affairs make you impatient of restraint ! It is unworthy of you to break the friendly ties such as once bound you and Munatius.

Nevertheless, wherever in the world you two may be, a heifer pastures in my field, vowed to the gods on your return.

. . . Ubicumque locorum  
Vivitis, indigni fratrum rumpere foedus,  
Pascitur in vestrum reditum vota juvenca.

## TO THE POET TIBULLUS

### THE FOURTH LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

Albius Tibullus was a poet of some distinction, a friend of Horace and about ten years his junior. When this letter was written he was a little over 30. Tibullus wrote heroic verse, but devoted himself especially to the production of elegies wherein he "wept over tender loves". He also celebrated in song the merits of Delia and later of Nemesis, persons whom we would not now consider either wise or good.

Horace seems to have been quite intimate with him. He addressed an Ode to him, I, 33, in which he protests rather facetiously at the serious way in which the elegiac poet took his love affairs. The opening and closing lines of this Ode have been translated thus by Martin :

Nay, Albius, a truce to this sighing and grieving!  
Is Glycera worth all this torture of brain?  
Why flatter her, lachrymose elegies weaving,  
Because she is false for a youthfuller swain?

Such caprices hath Venus, who, rarely propitious,  
Delights in her fetters of iron to bind  
Those pairs whom she sees, with a pleasure malicious,  
Unmatched both in fortune, and figure, and mind.

I myself, woo'd by one that was truly a jewel,  
In thralldom was held, which I cheerfully bore,  
By that vulgar thing, Myrtale, though she was cruel  
As waves that indent the Calabrian shore.

Tibullus was a knight and the possessor of property in the country. For a time he served in the army under Messala, to whose literary circle he belonged. It may be gathered from his verse, says Wilkin, that he was "a gentle, tender, melancholy soul." He died young.



*The Fourth Letter of the First Book* 19

There are in this epistle, says Rowlandson, "the nicest and most delicate touches of Morality, Praise and Raillery."

This letter was written between 24 and 20 B. C.

Albi, nostrorum sermonum candide iudex,  
Quid nunc te dicam facere in regione Pedana ?

Pedum was a small town in Latium near Praeneste.

Tibullus, fair-minded critic of my Satires that you are, tell me what you are doing now at your country seat near Pedum ? Are you writing things which will surpass the small works of Cassius ? Or sauntering quietly among your peaceful groves, intent on whatever pleases a wise and upright man ? You were never one who lacked a soul. The gods have given you beauty, wealth and the skill to enjoy it. What more could a kind nurse ask for her dear child than that he have wisdom ; that he be able to speak what he feels ; that a good name and good health be his, together with a good table and no lack of money ?

Cassius of Parma was one of the assassins of Caesar. He wrote elegies and epigrams of merit.

Dacier says that Tibullus had nearly ruined himself by his course of life and had returned to the country, tortured by chagrin.

Amid hopes and cares, amid fears and keen regrets, think that each new day which dawns will be your last ; then the hour for which we do not hope will come as a glad surprise.

Horace had been ill and under the care of Antonius Musa, the Emperor's physician. He is now apparently well again.

If you want to be amused, come and see me now, for I am fat and sleek and in fine condition, a very pig of the herd of Epicurus.

Inter spem curamque, timores inter et iras  
Omnem crede diem tibi diluxisse supremum :  
Grata superveniet quae non sperabitur hora.  
Me pinguem et nitidum bene curata cute vises,  
Cum ridere voles, Epicuri de grege porcum.

## TO MAECENAS

### THE SEVENTH LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

This letter was written from the Sabine Farm, probably in the month of September and at about the date of most of the other epistles. In it Horace explains why he has not for some time visited Maecenas; and, while conceding his obligations, tactfully declares his independence. He tells us about the art of giving graciously and illustrates it with the story of the Calabrian Host. Here is also the tale of the Lean Mouse, and another and longer one, that of Philip the Auctioneer, which is a good specimen of a Roman short story.

Scaliger says that this letter is "so elegant and polite a performance that nothing seems wanting to its perfection."

It reads as if Horace were trying to be a little more amusing than usual.

Quinque dies tibi pollicitus me rure futurum,  
Sextilem totum mendax desideror.

I promised to stay in the country for five days or so, and here it is, the end of August! I have not kept my word. But if you wish me to be well and to stay well, you must treat me as if I were an invalid, when in fact I only fear lest I be one. Really, I dare not go to Rome now, when the first figs are coming, and the heat is keeping the undertakers busy; when anxious fathers and mothers are worrying over their children, and while the ceaseless round of social duties, and the bustle

*The Seventh Letter of the First Book* 21

of the courts are bringing on fevers and unsealing wills.

Dum pueris omnis pater et matercula pallet,  
Officiosaque sedulitas et opella forensis  
Adducit febris et testamenta resignat.

When the first snows of winter cover the Alban Hills, I am going down to the sea shore and again take good care of myself,—I am going to wrap up well and read books; after that, my dear Maecenas, if you permit, when the spring breezes and first swallows come, your poet will visit you again.

You have made it possible for me to take this leisure, and you have done it in a pleasant way; not like the Calabrian host who offered pears to his guest:

The story of  
the Calabrian  
Host.

"Eat heartily," says he.

"I have had enough, thank you."

"Still, take as many as you can."

"You are very kind."

"If you will take some home they will please the children."

"I am as much obliged as if I went away loaded."

"As you like! What you do not take will have to be eaten to-day by the hogs!"

The wasteful and foolish give away what they despise and dislike, and by their gifts simply make the recipients ungrateful. The good and wise man is ready to help the deserving; and he knows the difference between merit and its counterfeit.

Vir bonus et sapiens dignis ait esse paratus,  
Nec tamen ignorat quid distent aera lupinis.

I shall always try to make myself conform to your wishes. But, if you want me to be always with you, Maecenas, you must give me back my strong constitution, and the black hair which once grew low on my forehead; you must make me talkative and eloquent again; ready to laugh and complain over our cups of the coquetries of Cinera, my early sweetheart.

The story of  
the Slender  
Field Mouse.

Once upon a time, a hungry field mouse crept through a narrow chink into a bin of corn and, having filled himself, tried in vain to get out again. A weasel looking on from a distance said to her: "If you wish to get out of there, Mistress Mouse, you must go back through that same narrow hole, as thin as when you came in.

. . . "Si vis" ait "effugere istinc,  
Macra cavum repetes artum, quem macra subisti."

Now, if I am to understand that this story applies to me, I will give back all that I have received. I would not exchange my independence and quiet for all the riches of Arabia. You have often praised me because I was modest in my demands. In your presence I have often called you father and patron, and was no more sparing of my acknowledgments in your absence.

Maecenas has  
offered Horace  
opportunities of  
higher living.

You will remember the reply of Telemachus, son of the much-enduring Ulysses, when Agamemnon offered to make him a present of some fine horses.

"Ithaca", said Telemachus, "is not a country fit for horses, as it has no rich pastures or fertile hay-fields;

so permit me to decline your gift, as being more suited for your own estate."

Small things become persons of small condition. It is not imperial Rome which charms, but quiet Tiber and the unwarlike Tarentum.

Parvum parva decent : mihi iam non regia Roma,  
Sed vacuum Tibur placet aut inbelle Tarentum.

The story goes that when that ornament of the bar, the famous and successful Philip, was returning from his office at about three o'clock and complaining, on account of his age, about the long walk from his home to the Forum, he saw a certain freedman sitting alone in a barber-shop, composedly paring his nails.

The story of  
Phillip, the  
Auctioneer.

"Demetrius", he says,—Demetrius is his foot-boy who executes his commands with great skill,—"Go and find out where that person lives; who he is; what is his fortune; who was his father and who is his patron."

The boy went and returned, saying, "His name is Vultius Mena. He is a clerk with a small income, but of good repute. He knows how to be active or idle as occasion demands, how to get and how to spend. He takes delight in modest companionship in his home; in seeing a play, or, after business is done, in taking a walk on the campus."

Praeconem, tenui censu, sine crimine, notum  
Et properare loco et cessare et quaerere et uti,  
Gaudentem parvisque sodalibus et lare certo  
Et ludis et post decisa negotia campo.

" I would like ", says Philip, " to know these particulars from himself ; so ask him to come and dine with me."

The boy returning again, said: " Mena is struck with astonishment and does not believe in your invitation. In fact, he simply says, I am to thank you."

" What ", says Philip, " does he refuse me ?"

" He does, absolutely, and either disregards you or is afraid of you."

The next morning Philip saw Mena, in his shirt-sleeves, selling odds and ends to the poor people, and courteously salutes him. Mena excuses himself to Philip for not having accepted his invitation and says he did so because of his work and the exactions of his calling.

" Well ", says Philip, " I will excuse you if you will sup with me this evening." Mena consents to this.

" Then ", says Philip, " come after four o'clock ; meanwhile go busy yourself with your affairs."

. . . " Ergo

Post nonam venies ; nunc i, rem strenuus auge."

Mena came to supper and talked freely of both public and private matters, and then was dismissed to bed.

When Philip observed that Mena had begun to come often to his house, like fish to a cleverly baited hook, and was a regular guest at his table, he bids him go with him as a companion to his country seat, during

the holidays. As they drive along together, Mena never stops praising the fields and the Sabine sky. Meanwhile Philip watches him and smiles. As he likes to amuse and divert himself in any old way he makes Mena a present of \$250, promises him \$250 more and persuades him to buy a farm.

Not to delay too long with tedious details: from a spruce citizen, Mena soon changes to a rough farmer, and prattles of nothing but his acres and vineyards. He raises his elms, is indefatigable in his labors, and soon begins to look old and bent in pursuit of gain.

. . . Ex nitido fit rusticus atque  
Sulcos et vineta crepat mera, praeparat ulmos,  
Immoritur studiis et amore senescit habendi.

By and by his sheep are stolen, his goats die of disease, his crops disappoint him and his ox is tired nearly to death by ploughing. Depressed by these things, he gets up one night at mid-night, mounts his horse and, worried and full of wrath, goes to the house of Philip. When Philip sees him, bent, aged, rough and slovenly as he was, he says:

"Vultius, you seem to slave too much, and to be over anxious and wretched over your affairs."

"Indeed, my friend and benefactor, 'wretched' is the right word, if you want to name me properly; I beseech and conjure you, by your own good angel and by all your household Gods, to restore me to my former condition."

So I say, Maecenas, when a man has found out that the life he once quitted is preferable to that which he has later chosen, let him return, and take up that which he has left. It is right that every man should be measured by his own standard and rule.

*Metiri se quemque suo modulo ac pede verum est.*



TO CLAUDIUS TIBERIUS NERO,  
INTRODUCING SEPTIMIUS

THE NINTH LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

Tiberius was the step-son of Augustus and succeeded him as Emperor. Horace here sends a letter to him introducing his friend Septimius.

In Ode II, 6 Horace sends to Septimius an invitation to his country home. The poem shows the intimacy and friendship of the two men. Sir Theodore Martin translates the last two stanzas thus :

There Jove accords a lengthen'd spring,  
And winters wanting winter's sting,  
And sunny Aulon's broad incline  
Such mettle puts into the vine,  
Its clusters need not envy those  
Which fiery Falernum grows.

Thyself and me that spotinvites,  
Those pleasant fields, those sunny heights ;  
And there, to life's last moments true,  
Wilt thou with some fond tears bedew—  
The last sad tribute love can lend—  
The ashes of thy poet friend.

We know little of Septimius except that he was a man of character and position. The letter of introduction has been often quoted as a model of tact and discreet yet genuine commendation.

The first translation here given was made by Sir Richard Steele and published in the *Spectator*. The second translation is by Elizabeth Du B. Peck, Ph. D.

Septimius, Claudii, nimirum intellegit unus,  
Quanti me facias.

To Tiberius Nero.

Sir:

Septimius, who waits upon you with this, is very well acquainted with the place you are pleased to allow me in your friendship. For when he beseeches me to recommend him to your notice, in such a manner as to be received by you, who are delicate in the choice of your friends and domestics, he knows our intimacy, and understands my ability to serve him better than I do myself. I have defended myself against his ambition to be yours, as long as I possibly could; but fearing the imputation of hiding my power in you out of mean and selfish considerations, I am at last prevailed upon to give you this trouble. Thus, to avoid the appearance of a greater fault, I have put on this confidence. If you can forgive this transgression of modesty in behalf of a friend, receive this gentleman into your interests and friendship, and take it from me that he is an honest and a brave man.

---

Septimius is the one man, Claudius, who knows, or thinks he does, how much you make of me. For when

he urges me, in season and out of season, to find an opportunity of presenting him to you, as one who deserves the confidence of so wise and discriminating a gentleman as the Emperor, he rates my influence with you and my ability to serve him as I should not venture to rate them myself.

I have begged to be excused for one reason and another, but I was afraid, if I persisted in refusing, that I might seem insensible to your kindness, hiding under a pretended lack of power a real unwillingness to oblige. Therefore, to avoid the appearance of a greater fault, I have descended to the importunity of a mere courtier.

So, if you will pardon my presumption on behalf of a friend, allow me to commend the bearer to you as one who is worthy in every way of your kindness and consideration.

## TO ARISTIUS FUSCUS

### THE TENTH LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

Aristius Fuscus was one of Horace's intimate friends. He addressed to him his famous ode beginning "Integer vitae"; and Fuscus is the one who played a little trick on the poet when he was being interviewed by a bore, Sat. I, 9. Fuscus was a city man, not averse, perhaps, to the prevalent habit of money-making.

Horace's reasons for preferring the country to the town are, says his editor, "forcible and persuasive and are taken from the *Morals of Epicurus*. This Epistle is really beautiful." Its moralities are certainly beyond reproach. There is a final touch which is often quoted and which alone gives the letter distinction.

Urbis amatorem Fuscum salvere iubemus  
Ruris amatores,

We lovers of the country, salute you, Fuscus, a lover of the town. Indeed in this alone we seem to differ; in other things we are almost twin brothers. What one denies the other denies, too; and we nod assent to each other like a pair of ancient and well-mated doves.

Adnuimus pariter: veluti notique columbi,

You keep your nest in town, I prefer the streams, the moss-grown rocks and groves of the alluring country. In short, I live and feel myself a king as soon as I have



VIEW OF THE VALLEY OF LICENZA AND MONTE CAMPENILE, FROM ROCCA GIOVANE.

From a photograph taken for this book.



left those things which you praise to heaven with approving shouts. Like a fugitive slave of the priests, tired of the confections of the temple, I long for plain bread: far better, to my thinking, than the honeyed cakes of the altars.

If we are to live agreeably to Nature, and if, to do this, a plot of ground is to be obtained upon which to build a home, do you know of any better spot than the happy country? Where are the winters milder? Where do the breezes soften more gratefully the heat of the Dog star, and the motions of the Lion, when he rages at the sharp beams of the Sun? Where does envious care so rarely break one's sleep?

Est ubi divellat somnos minus invidia cura?

Is our foliage less fragrant and bright than the city's Lybian mosaics? The water in your streets that strains to burst the leaden pipes, is it purer than that which tumbles and babbles down the sloping bed? And see! there are trees planted among the many colored columns of your town, and that house is most admired which overlooks long fields! You may drive out Nature with a pitch-fork; she will nevertheless return and conquer you and quietly overthrow the mistakes of your fastidiousness.

Naturam expelles furca, tamen usque recurret  
Et mala perrumpet furtim fastidia victrix.

The man who is so unskillful that he cannot tell

The slaves of the priests eat the rich food supplied for the temples. They grew tired of this and would slip away to get plainer fare.

The Dog star rises July 20; the sun enters the Constellation of Leo, July 23.

Horace abruptly drops into moralizing.



Tyrian purple  
was imitated by  
Aquitanian  
dyes made  
from cudbear.

Aquitania was  
in Latium and  
not far from  
Rome. It was  
the birthplace  
of Juvenal.

This is  
Horace's  
cardinal  
principle; *Nil  
admirari.*

fleeces dyed in Aquitania from the Tyrian purple will not suffer a greater loss or one that goes more closely to his heart than he who cannot distinguish the false from the true.

He whom favoring fortune transports with an excess of joy is depressed in equal measure when reverses come. Whatever you deeply admire you give up with reluctance. So shun extremes. It is possible under a humble roof to pass a worthier life than do Kings or the Friends of Kings.

. . . *Siquid mirabere, pones  
Invitus. Fuge magna : licet sub paupere tecto  
Reges et regum vita praecurrere amicos.*

A stag once over-matched a fighting horse in their common pasture. Then the horse, worsted in the long combat, implored man's assistance, and submitted to the bridle. But, though he defeated the stag, never from that hour was he able to shake the rider from his back, or the bit from his mouth.

Money should  
follow like a  
captive with a  
twisted rope  
around the  
neck, rather  
than lead.

So he who, fearing poverty, gives up a freedom more precious than wealth, has taken a master whom he must always serve, because he never learned to be content with little. That kind of fortune which does not suit a man is like a bad shoe; if too large it trips him up; if too small it pinches him. So accept cheerfully your lot, *Aristius*, and you will live wisely; and do not let me go without reproof when I am seen to be amassing too much, and working without a rest. Money





Sic qui pauperiem vertius potiore metallis  
Libertate caret, dominum vehet improbus atque  
Serviet aeternum, quia parvo nesciet uti.

Ep. I, 10

So he who, fearing penury, loses hold  
Of independence, better far than gold,  
Will toil, a hopeless drudge, till life is spent,  
Because he'll never, never learn content.

*Conington*



is either one's master or one's slave; it should be led by you, not drag you at its heels.

Imperat aut servit collecta pecunia cuique,  
Tortum digna sequi potius quam ducere funem.

This I wrote behind the crumbling Temple of Vacuna: Happy in all things except that you were not with me.

Haec tibi dictabam post fanum putre Vacunae,  
Excepto quod non simul esses, cetera laetus.

Vacuna was the Goddess of Vacation.

There was a temple to her about three miles from the confluence of the Digentia and Anio and near the present town of Rocca Giovane. It was not far from Horace's home.

## TO ICCIUS

### THE TWELFTH LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

To this same friend, Iccius, about to set out on a military expedition to Arabia, Horace addressed Ode twenty-nine of the first book. The present letter was written five years later, B. C. 20, when Iccius was in charge of the estates of Agrippa in Sicily. Horace represents him as discontented with this position because his work kept him from his philosophical studies; and moralizes to the effect that one can keep an interest in the higher things, even if he live in the rush of affairs. The letter tells us also what were some of the problems which the philosophers at that time were studying. The final and most human part of the letter is the introduction of Pompeius Grosphus, a rich Sicilian knight, to Iccius.

Horace once wrote a fine Ode to Grosphus, II, 16, which indicates that his friend was well-to-do, but that the conditions might change.

A random hour may toss to me  
Some gifts, my friend, refused to thee.

A hundred flocks thy pastures roam :  
Large herds, deep-uddered, low around thy home

At the red close of day :

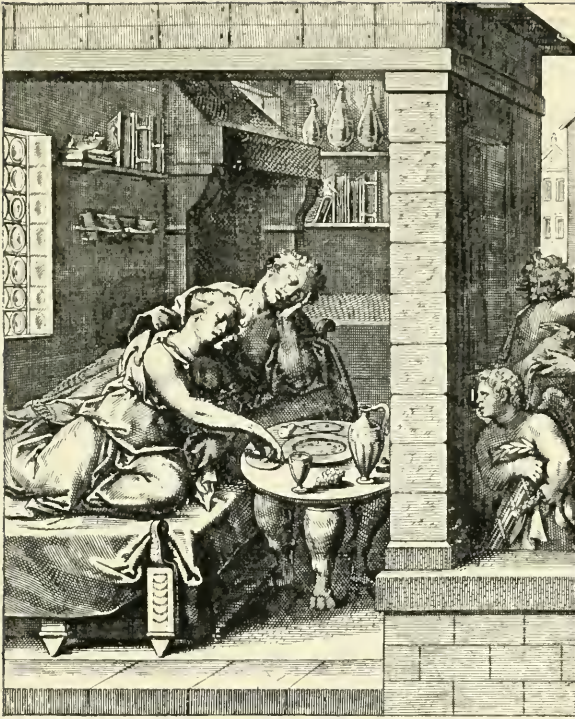
The steed with joyous neigh

Welcomes thy footstep : robes that shine

Twice dipt in Afric dyes are thine.

To me kind fate with bounteous hand

Grants other boon ; a spot of land,



Pauper enim non est cui rerum suppetit usus.  
Si ventri bene, si lateri est pedibusque tuis, nil  
Divitiae poterunt regales addere maius.

Ep. I, 12

With another's store  
To use at pleasure, who shall call you poor?  
Sides, stomach, feet, if these are all in health,  
What more can man procure with princely wealth?

*Conington*



A faint flame of poetic fire,  
A breath from the Aeolian lyre,  
An honest aim, a spirit proud  
That loves the truth, and scorns the crowd.

---

Fructibus Agrippae Siculis, quos colligis, Icci,  
Si recte fueris, non est ut copia maior  
Ab love donari possit tibi.

If you will only use in a proper way, Iccius, the revenues of Agrippa which you collect in Sicily, Jove himself cannot make you richer. Stop, then, your complaints. He is not poor who has his hand upon life's treasure-chest. When the stomach, the lungs and the feet are sound, the wealth of kings cannot add more.

Pauper enim non est cui rerum suppetit usus.  
Si ventri bene, si lateri est pedibusque tuis, nil  
Divitiae poterunt regales addere maius.

If while in the midst of abundance you live abstemiously upon vegetables and salads, you will do the same later tho' a flowing River of Fortune gilded you over; for money does not change a nature like yours—or else you think everything less important than the practice of philosophy. I do not wonder that Democrates, absorbed in philosophy, allowed the cattle to eat up his corn, when I see you, in the midst of men who suffer from this contagious itch after Riches, concerning yourself with no trivial things, but devoting yourself as usual to these momentous questions: What forces control the Sea? What regulate the seasons?

Referring to the Pythagorean doctrine that animals had souls and to kill them was murder.

The Epicureans believed in Chance; the Stoics in a controlling Deity.

Do the stars of themselves or by command roam and wander? What obscures and what reveals the light of the moon? For what does this discordant harmony of nature seek and plan? And is Empedocles or the wit of Sterinius the more foolish?

However, whether you are living on the fish you murder or on leeks and onions pray receive Pompeius Grosphus into your friendship, and if he asks a favor grant it to him freely; Grosphus will ask nothing but what is right and just and the price of friends is low when good men are in want.

*Vilis amicorum est annona, bonis ubi quid dest.*

That you may know the latest news at Rome, let me add: The Cantabrian is defeated by the valor of Agrippa, Armenia by that of Claudius Nero; Phraetes on his knees has acknowledged the power and rule of Caesar. Golden Plenty from a full horn has diffused rich harvests throughout Italy.

. . . . aurea fruges  
*Italiae pleno defundit Copia cornu.*





VARIA, NOW VICOVARO, A TOWN AT THE FOOT OF THE VALLEY OF THE LICENZA.

From a photograph taken for this book.



## TO THE STEWARD OF HIS FARM

### THE FOURTEENTH LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

This letter is addressed from Rome to the Steward of Horace's farm, who was one of his head slaves. It seems curiously apologetic. It might be inferred that even under the conditions of slavery the Romans had trouble about keeping servants in the country, except during the season, just as we do to-day. The sentiments of the letter are very modern, though to-day no one argues so frankly with his head butler! Horace wants to know whether he or his slave is doing his duty the better!

Vilice silvarum et mihi me reddentis agelli,  
Quem tu fastidis habitatum quinque focus et  
Quinque bonos solitum Variam dimittere patres.

You are Steward of my woods and of the little farm that always makes me feel as if I were my own master; but you dislike the farm, though it supports five families, and always sends five householders to *Varia*. Let us see now which of us can more effectively root out defects, you, those you find in my soil, or I, those I find in my mind, and whether Horace or his farm is the more at fault.

Lamia's devotion and grief keep me here, while he mourns a brother and indeed sorrows inconsolably over his death. Yet my mind and heart bear me hence, and I long to break the barriers that oppose my way.

I call him happy who lives in the country, you call

*Varia* was the nearest town; it was on the Anio just where the river Digentia joins it. *Vicovaro* is its present name.

Horace explains his stay in town, and begins his argument.

him happy who lives in town. Whenever the home of another pleases one, he dislikes his own. Each one foolishly lays the blame on an innocent place, when really the fault is in the mind, which tries in vain to escape from itself.

You, when you were a slave in town silently prayed for the fields; now, as Steward, you long for the city and its sports and baths. But, as you know, I have always been consistent, and always left the farm in sadness when some hateful business took me to Rome.

We like quite different things, hence this argument between me and you. What you look upon as a desert, as inhospitable wilds, those who feel as I do call charming, and we hate what you think beautiful.

I see, the brothel and the dirty inns stir up your longing for the city; you think this remote little corner of mine will produce pepper and incense rather than good hay; and you say there is here no near-by tavern to furnish you with wine, nor any cheap flute girl to the noise of whose notes you can practice a clumsy dance; besides, you have to work incessantly breaking up the fields which have not been ploughed, and looking after the unyoked oxen and filling them with gathered leaves. The river also adds to your labors when you have no other work, for it has to be taught by many an embankment to spare the sunny meadow when the rains descend.

Pepper and incense were not good farm products.

Addit opus pigro rivus, si decidit imber,  
Multa mole docendus aprico parcere prato.



ENTRANCE TO THE SABINE FARM, AS IT  
APPEARS TO-DAY.

Photographed for this book.



*The Fourteenth Letter of the First Book* 39

Come, now, and hear what breaks the harmony between us. I who once was dressed with fine togas and shining hair, whom you know to have pleased rapacious Cinara without rich presents, who drank pure Falernian at noon time, now am satisfied with a short meal and a nap on the river-bank.

Quem tenues decuere togae nitidique capilli,  
Quem scis immunem Cinaræ placuisse rapaci,  
Quem bibulum liquidi media de luce Falerni:  
Cena brevis juvat et prope rivum somnus in herba :

I am not ashamed to have played the game, or now to have broken off from the sports. For now, no one with envious eye disparages my pleasures, or poisons them with their dislike and envy. The villagers smile at me working over the turf and rocks.

You prefer to eat your daily allowance in the city with slaves, and are eager to be in their company ; yet my shrewd body-servant here envies you the enjoyments of my woods and flocks and garden.

The ox would love to wear the horse's trappings ; the lazy farm horse thinks he'd like to plough ; but I should say, whatever art any one knows how to practice, let him stick to it.

Optat ephippia bos, piger optat arare caballus :  
Quam scit uterque, libens, censebo, exerceat artem.

## TO QUINCTIUS

### THE SIXTEENTH LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

Quinctius is the man to whom Horace addresses Ode II, 2; he obtained some success in life and was Consul, B. C. 9; he was a younger man than Horace,—and this is all we know of him. Horace had had his Sabine farm about six years and was about thirty-eight when he wrote about it in this letter.

"Philosophy has here all its persuasive force without any of that morose stiffness which discourages many from studying it," says Davidson.

It is a very characteristic epistle, beginning with a description of his farm and then dropping into complicated ethical and economic themes.

Ne perconteris, fundus meus, optime Quincti,  
Arvo pascat erum an bacis opulentet olivae,  
Pomisne et pratis an amicta vitibus ulmo:  
Scribetur tibi forma loquaciter et situs agri.

He describes  
his farm. To save you from asking, my dear Quinctius, whether my farm supports its owner and is making him rich with its olives, fruits and hay, and with its vines bound to the elms, let me tell you casually something of its shape and situation.

It lies on a range of hills, broken by a shady valley which is so placed that the sun when rising strikes the right side, and when descending in his flying chariot, warms the left. You would like the climate; and if you





Oderunt peccare boni virtutis amore;  
Tu nihil admittes in te formidine poenae:  
Sit spes fallendi, miscebis sacra profanis.

Ep. I, 16

'Tis love of right that keeps the good from wrong;  
You do no harm because you fear the thong;  
Could you be sure that no one would detect,  
E'en sacrilege might tempt you, I suspect.

*Conington*



*The Sixteenth Letter of the First Book* 41

were to see my fruit trees, bearing ruddy cornils and plums, my oaks and ilex supplying food to my herds, and abundant shade to the master, you would say, "Tarentum in its beauty has been brought near to Rome!"

There is a fountain too, large enough to give a name to the river which it feeds;

Fons etiam rivo dare nomen idoneus,

and Hebrus itself does not flow through Thrace with cooler or purer stream. Its waters also are good for the head and useful for digestion. This sweet, and, if you will believe me, charming retreat keeps me in good health during the autumnal days.

Hae latebrae dulces, etiam, si credis, amoenae,  
Incolumem tibi me praestant Septembribus horis.

You are doing well, my friend, if you are at pains to be what is reported of you; for all Rome has long been calling you fortunate. But I am afraid you may be trusting to the judgment of those who are saying these things rather than to your own opinion, and are beginning to think that persons may be happy though they are not either good or wise. Or perhaps, though people say you are in good health, you are like one who conceals a hidden fever which breaks out at the time of eating, when a trembling seizes the hands and discloses the affliction. Now it is only false and foolish shame which makes one hide his uncured sores.

He begins to moralize: Do not be sure you are sound because people say so.

Beware of flattery and insincerity. If any one should begin to tell of the battles you had fought by sea and land, and then should go on to please your ears with words like these : " Jupiter, who takes care of you and the City, leaves us in doubt whether the people care more for you or you for the people ", you could perhaps recognize that as praise due, not to you, but only to Augustus Caesar !

A dialogue begins on real righteousness. Horace : " When you suffer yourself to be called wise and accomplished, do you accept the compliment, tell me, comrade ? "

Quinctius : " Yes, truly, I like to be called a good and prudent man, just as you do yourself. "

Horace continues. Horace : " But the people who give you this applause to-day, tomorrow they will refuse it, just as the same voters who elect to office an unworthy man may soon remove him from it. Resign, they say, the honor is another's. I resign, and retire sadly.

" However, if these same people acclaim me a thief, lost to sense of shame, and assert that I have strangled my father, I shall not, under such false calumnies, be bitter or change color. For undeserved honors please, while false reports alarm only him who is untrustworthy and in need of betterment. "

The conventional good man. If one asks : " Who then is a good man ? " The usual answer is : " He who keeps the decrees of the Senate and the statutes and laws of the State ; before whom as judge many grave suits are justly decided ;



Perdidit arma, locum virtutis deseruit, qui  
Semper in augenda festinat et obruitur re.

Ep. I, 16

The wretch whose thoughts by gain are all engrossed  
Has flung away his sword, betrayed his post.

*Conington*



who is able to go on a bond; and upon whose testimony causes are settled."

. . . "Vir bonus est quis?  
Qui consulta patrum, qui leges iuraque servat,  
Quo multae magnaecque secantur iudice lites,  
Quo res sponsore et quo causae teste tenentur."

Yet perhaps his family and all his neighbors know this man to be in reality base, though shining speciously in a decorous skin.

If my slave says to me, "I have never been a thief, or tried to run away." The motives of right conduct.

"You have your reward," I say, "you are not smarting from the lash!"

If he says, "I have never killed any one."

"Very well", I answer, "you are not feeding the crows on a cross!"

If he says, "I am a good and honest servant." Well, then my Sabine steward, who knows him, shakes his head, and doubts it! And I say to him,

"The wolf prowls about very cautiously because it suspects pitfalls; the hawk is wary, for it dreads the unseen snare; and the pike fears the hidden hook. The good dislike to sin, because they love virtue; while you keep clear of crime, because of punishment. If there is any hope of covering your tracks, you will mix up sacred things with profane.

Oderunt peccare boni virtutis amore;  
Tu nihil admittes in te formidine poenae:



When you steal but one bushel of beans out of a thousand, the danger of discovery is slight, I admit, but the crime I think is the same as if you stole a hundred."

The good man. This good man at whom all the forum stares and who is admired at every tribunal—whenever he offers the gods a sacrifice of a hog or cow, cries out very, very loudly, "Father Janus", and again, "Father Apollo." Then softly, fearing to be heard, he mutters, "Beautiful Laverna", goddess of the robbers, "grant that I may seem just and holy; throw night over my sins and a cloud over my deceits."

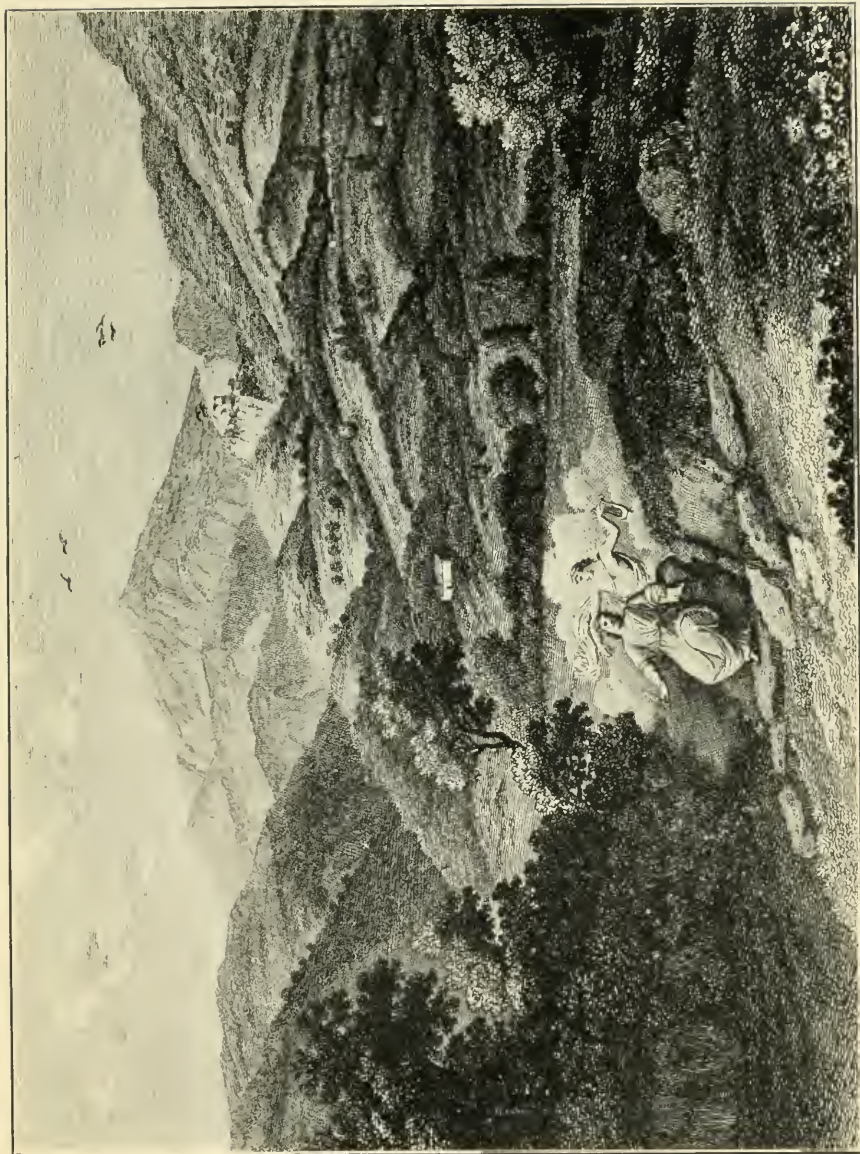
. . . "Pulchra Laverna,  
Da mihi fallere, da iusto sanctoque videri,  
Noctem peccatis, et fraudibus obice nubem."

I do not see how much better or less free than a slave is the man of avarice, who stops to pick up a counterfeit penny stuck in mud. For he who desires has fears, and he who fears will never in my opinion be free.

He who is always in haste or a mad rush to increase his fortune, has dropped his aim and deserted the post of honor. Yet I would not kill such a man; he has his uses. Let him be a captive and work to some purpose, pasture the cattle, plough the land, go to sea and pass the winter on the water and bring corn and provisions to market.

The real man of sense and honor will dare to





THE VALLEY OF THE LICENZA.

From an engraving of a picture by Philip Hackert, about 1790.



*The Sixteenth Letter of the First Book* 45

answer as Bacchus did: " Pentheus, King of Thebes, what indignity will you compel me to endure? "

" I will take away your goods. "

" Very well, my herds and money and beds and silver, you can take them! "

" I will put you in shackles and fetters under a cruel jailor. "

" God himself will release me whenever I wish. "

He means, I think, " I will die. " For death is the ultimate boundary of our affairs.

. . . Opinor,  
Hoc sentit " Moriar. " Mors ultima linea rerum est.

## TO LOLLIUS MAXIMUS

### THE EIGHTEENTH LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

Lollius was probably the son of the Lollius to whom Horace addressed an Ode, IV, 9; he was Consul, B. C. 21. This fixes the son as a man of family. He had a country house and considerable possessions, but was probably ambitious socially and politically. Horace addresses another Epistle to him, Ep. I, 2, written about three years earlier (B. C. 23).

Davidson says, "This beautiful letter was written to fortify Lollius against the principal vices to whose attacks he was most exposed."

To us to-day the first portion of the letter seems most remote in its sentiments and ethics. This, however, furnishes it with a special interest, for it gives us a lost point of view. The latter part of the poem has as great value to-day as it had in the time of Augustus.

Si bene te novi, metues, liberrime Lolli,  
Scurrantis speciem praeberere, professus amicum.

If I have come to know you well, my Lollius, you will scorn to play the part of a parasite, when you profess yourself a friend. As a matron is unlike the courtesan and of different dress, so a friend is far removed from a court jester.

Obsequiousness  
and courtesy.

There is a vice different from and perhaps greater than obsequiousness. It is a clownish, impolite and gross asperity, which prides itself on a badly shaven

*The Eighteenth Letter of the First Book* 47

skin and unclean teeth ; things it wishes to be considered as signs of independence and merit. But courtesy is a mean between these faults and equally remote from each extreme.

Virtus est medium vitiorum et utrimque reductum.

One man is too prone to servility, a jester at the lowest table, who watches the nod of the host, repeats his jokes and catches at each word he utters so that you would think him a pupil noting the speech of an exacting master, or an actor playing some second-rate part. Another will " quarrel about the wool of a goat."

A proverbial expression : to quarrel about what does not exist.

Alter rixatur de lana saepe caprina,  
Propugnat nugis armatus :

" The idea ", he says, " that I should not be believed before every one else ! As if, indeed, I should not say what I please and speak with perfect freedom ! I would not care to live my life twice over at the price you ask,—my independence !"

And after all, what is being debated ? Whether Castor or Docilis has the greater skill ? or which is the better road to Brundisium, by the Appian or by the Minucian road ? Mere trifles !

A man whom the *damnosa Venus* or the fatal dice is ruining, who in his vanity clothes and perfumes himself beyond his means, who is governed by an

Quem damnosa Venus, quem praeceps alea nudat,  
Gloria quem supra vires et vestit et unguat,

insatiate thirst for money and fame, such a person your wealthy friend loathes and despises, even though he is a much worse man himself. Or, if he does not despise him, he nags him and, like an anxious mother, wishes his dependent to be more prudent and moral than himself. He tells him, what is pretty nearly true: " My wealth can stand some follies ; do not try to vie with me ; your income is too small ; a scanty toga becomes a prudent dependent ; so cease to enter the lists with the rich."

*Arta decet sanum comitem toga :*

Eutrapelus, from eutrapelia, " a refined impertinence ", was the name given to Volumnius, a knight to whom Cicero wrote certain letters. When Eutrapelus wished to do mischief to anyone he sent him expensive clothes ; for then, his victim, delighted with his beautiful garments, conceives new plans and hopes ; lies in bed till day-light, neglects his proper business for the harlot, and lives on the money he borrows. At last he has to turn gladiator or drive a gardener's cart to market.

You should not pry into your friend's secrets or reveal what is told you even if you are drunk or he has made you angry.

*Arcanum neque tu scrutaberis illius umquam,  
Commissumque tegetes et vino tortus et ira.*

Amphion and Zethus were twin brothers, sons of Antiope and Jupiter. Do not commend your own amusements or find fault with those of others. When your patron wishes to hunt, do not stay at home and write poetry. By such conduct the affection of the twin brothers



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Amphion and Zethus was destroyed, until the lyre, which had annoyed the austere brother, grew silent; for Amphion, we are told, yielded in the end to his brother's tastes.

So do you yield to the kindly commands of your powerful friend; and as often as he leads out to the fields his dogs and his horses loaded with Aetolian nets, get up, lay aside the moroseness of your unsocial muse so that you may dine like your patron upon savory fare purchased by your own labor. Exercise like this is a good old Roman fashion. It will put blood into your veins and make you a better man,

Romanis sollemne viris opus, utile famae  
Vitaeque et membris,

especially if you are in condition and can outrun the dogs and surpass the boar in strength. Besides, there is no one who handles his weapons more skillfully than you. You know how the Grand Stand applauds when you take part in the contests in the Campus Martius. Indeed, even as a boy you served in a hard campaign, and in the Cantabrian Wars, under the leader who is now taking down the standards from the temples of the Parthians and is bringing to Roman arms whatever was lacking to complete their glory. And further, that you may not be a spoil-sport, you know you sometimes go to your place in the country and amuse yourself with the game.

Amphion became a musician, Zethus a herdsman and hunter. Zethus could not bear the sound of Amphion's lyre, and they quarreled over it until Amphion finally gave it up. Euripides in his *Antiope* and Pacuvius in his *Antiope* introduce these characters, and they argue over the relative value of music and philosophy. Aetolia was a province in Greece abounding in boars; its King, Meleager, here killed the Caledonian boar, a fact that is recorded in a picture found in a house in Pompeii.

He reminds  
Lollius of his  
former athletic  
habits.

Augustus  
fought the  
Cantabrians, a  
tribe of  
northern Spain,  
B. C. 27, 26,  
25. In B. C.  
20 Phraates  
or Prahates,  
King of the  
Parthians,  
concluded a  
treaty with  
Augustus,  
agreeing to  
send back the  
prisoners and  
standards taken  
from Crassus.

You arrange your army in two divisions; the battle of Actium is represented in vigorous action by slaves under your command, and by your brother who leads the enemy; your pond is the Adriatic, and there you fight till swift Victory crowns one or the other with laurel.

Your friend who finds that you are yielding to his tastes would applaud such sport with both thumbs.

Further let me advise you, if you need advice, to be careful what you say about anybody and to whom you say it. Avoid a gossip. He is always a tattler; his wide-spread ears do not keep the secrets committed to them, and a word once spoken never returns.

Quid de quoque viro et cui dicas, saepe videto.  
Percontatorem fugito; nam gurrulus idem est,  
Nec retinent patulae commissa fideliter aures,  
Et semel emissum volat inrevocabile verbum.

While you are in the house of an honored friend never cast your eyes upon any of his slaves lest the master of some beautiful boy or winsome girl grant you a thing which is of no importance—and hold it against you afterward—or distress you by a refusal!

Consider again and again what sort of a man you present to your friend, lest by and by the faults of others put you to the blush. We are all fallible, and sometimes we introduce the unworthy. If you see that you have been deceived in one whom you have introduced, do not try to defend him. You should protect





LICENZA, AS IT APPEARS TO-DAY.

From a photograph taken for this book.



the man whom you know well, and who trusts you, from false accusations. When a friend of yours is gnawed by the tooth of Theon, do you not feel that the danger is coming pretty near home? For your own business is affected when your neighbor's wall is on fire, and flames neglected gather strength.

Theon was a very witty and abusive freedman and stands here for Slander.

Nam tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet,  
Et neglecta solent incendia sumere vires.

Sweet to the inexperienced is the cultivation of important persons. The experienced dread it.

Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici;  
Expertus metuet.

But while your ship is on the deep, drive it along, lest a changed breeze bring it back.

The gloomy hate the merry and the cheerful hate the sad, the sprightly the sedate, and the indolent the stirring and active. The midnight drinkers of Falernian wine dislike one who passes his turn, even if he swears he is afraid of the fumes of wine at night.

Potores bibuli media de nocte Falerni  
Oderunt porrecta negantem pocula,

Lay aside the cloud from your brow; the modest man often passes for a mysterious one and the silent man for a morose.

Meanwhile read and consult the philosophers. Learn from them how you may pass life agreeably; that fruitless desires and fear or hope of things that profit

Digentia, a  
river flowing  
near Horace's  
farm and  
emptying into  
the Anio. It is  
now called  
Licenza.

Mandela was a  
village situated  
on a lofty  
eminence, near  
the Digentia,  
and exposed to  
the north. It  
thus came to  
be called  
" *rugosus*  
*frigore pagus.*"  
Its name today  
is Contalupa  
Bandello.

little should never worry you; whether study brings  
Inter cuncta leges et percontabere doctos,  
wisdom or nature bestows it; what it is that lessens  
cares; what makes you content with yourself; what  
gives you untroubled calm, honors, or sweet lucre, or a  
quiet road and the path of an unmolested life.

For me, as often as I am refreshed by the cool  
waters of Digentia, the stream from which drinks  
Mandela, a village grown wrinkled with the cold, of  
what do you suppose I think, and for what, my friend,  
is my prayer? That I may retain what I now possess,  
or even less; that I may live quietly by myself what  
remains of life, if the Gods wish any to remain; that  
I may have a good supply of books and provisions  
for a year; that I may not hang in suspense over each  
precarious hour.

But of Jove I ask only those things which he can  
give and can take away. Let him give me only life and  
riches; I will make for myself a contented mind.

Sed satis est orare Iovem, quae donat et aufert:  
Det vitam, det opes; aequum mi animum ipse parabo.

## TO HIS BOOK

### THE TWENTIETH LETTER OF THE FIRST BOOK

This letter was written as an epilogue to the Epistles forming the first Book, and Horace here addresses this book as if it were a slave anxious to be free. It was the custom, after a book (*volumen*) was finished to roll it up and polish the ends with pumice. If not for sale it was then put in a case and sealed or locked.

This letter is a good specimen of the author's humor. Horace here takes occasion also to speak a kind word of himself.

Vertumnum Ianumque, liber, spectare videris,  
Scilicet ut prostes Sosiorum pumice mundus.

You, my book, seem to be staring at Vertumnus and Janus, in the hope of course that you may be polished up and put on sale by the firm of the Sosii. You hate the restraints which please the modest; you are in torment at being seen by few; you love the public eye though not so brought up. Fly then to where you long to be. But remember, once sent out you can never return.

"What, wretched book that I am, what have I done?" you will say when some one tears you up; or you find yourself folded tight and thrown aside, by a reader who is tired of you. But if I, a prophet, am not, in my resentment over your departure, mistaken about your fate, you will be liked in Rome only till

The Sosii brothers were well known booksellers and their shop was presumably near the statues of Vertumnus and of Janus.

"To Utica",  
means in  
general, Africa,  
and "to Ilerda",  
Spain.

your youth departs. When, thumbed by the hands of the vulgar, you begin to get soiled, you will soon become the food of moths, or will be banished to Utica, or sent in a bundle to Spain. I, your disregarded monitor, will then laugh; like the angry peasant who pushed his refractory ass over the precipice. For who tries to save a fool against his will?

. . . quis enim invitum servare laboret?

This also is in store for you: some snuffing old pedant in the city suburbs will use you to teach boys the elements of language!

When some temperate evening gathers more hearers about you, you may tell them that I, born of a freed-man and of low fortune, have soared beyond my nest; that what they take from me on account of birth they may add on account of merit; that I was received among the great of Rome, both statesmen and generals; that I was of short stature, prematurely gray, fond of the sun, of quick temper, yet easily appeased. If any one chance to ask my age, let him know that I had seen 44 Decembers when Lollius accepted Lepidus as his colleague.

Ut quantum generi demas, virtutibus addas;  
Me primis urbis belli placuisse domique,  
Corporis exigui, praecanum, solibus aptum,  
Irasci celerem, tamen ut placabilis essem.  
Forte meum siquis te percontabitur aevum,  
Me quater undenos sciat implevisse Decembris  
Conlegam Lepidum quo dixit Lollius anno.

## TO AUGUSTUS CAESAR

### THE FIRST LETTER OF THE SECOND BOOK

Mommsen calls the three epistles of the second book "the most graceful and delightful works of all Roman literature." The present epistle to Augustus has always, says Wilkin, been a favorite one, and other editors assure us that it ought to be considered one of the most valuable that has been left us. Pope says that the epistle shows "that Augustus prohibited all but the best writers to name him." This is the position which Horace here wishes him to do. It is the only letter Horace addressed to Augustus and it is probably the last one he wrote, being composed about B. C. 13 when this author was fifty-two years old.

It is usually supposed, on the authority of Suetonius, that it was written by imperial command; but it sounds to one now as if the composition were rather urged upon Horace by the Poets' Club of that day, for it is in effect an apology for the poets and especially for the good poets who refused to write for the stage, or for anything but just art's sake.

Horace praises Augustus, but not at all more than is deserved and with no superlatives. Furthermore, he declines and not very graciously to write any epic in praise of his Emperor. He assures Augustus that he can not write good poetry of this kind and adds that he will not write verse which will be used by the store-keepers to wrap their perfumes and groceries in; and with this declaration he ends.

Cum tot sustineas et tanta negotia solus  
Res Italas armis tuteris, moribus ornes,  
Legibus emendes: in publica commoda peccem,  
Si longo sermone morer tua tempora, Caesar.

You are bearing the heavy burden, Caesar, of many and very serious affairs, and you are bearing it alone; you are protecting Italy with your armies and you are reforming its morals and improving its laws. Under these circumstances, for me to take your time with a long letter would be to sin against the common welfare.

Horace shows that merit is not recognized until after death.

Romulus, Father Liber and Castor and Pollux were admitted after death to the temples as Gods because of their great and worthy deeds; but while they, being still on earth, were subduing nature, improving the human race, bringing civil wars to end, establishing property in land and founding cities, they grieved because they did not receive the respect and approval

Ploravere suis non respondere favorem  
Speratum meritis.

they hoped for and their good deeds deserved. Even Hercules, who killed the dreadful Hydra and destroyed those other well-known monsters and thus accomplished the tasks which fate imposed on him, found that envy could be overcome only by his death. Any man who outshines all other men in power and valor, arouses jealousy by his own excellence; yet, no sooner is he dead, than those who are jealous and envious of him living, at once begin to venerate him.

Urit enim fulgore suo, qui praegravat artis  
Infra se positas, extinctus amabitur idem.

Not so in Caesar's case.

But to you, Caesar, we give honors as soon as they are due, while you are still with us; we set up altars



on which to swear in your name and we frankly admit that your equal among men never has appeared before and will never appear again.

\* \* \* \* \*

Yet these your willing subjects who are so wise and just when they put you above all our own national heroes, and above all Greek heroes as well, decide other matters in a very different way and by a very different standard. They dislike and even despise everything new, and everybody not exalted by death. They are such servile worshippers of the old that they declare that the Laws of the Twelve Tables enacted by the Decemvirs, the treaties made by the kings, with Gabii or stern Sabines, the books of the priests and the sayings of ancient soothsayers are all from the Muses speaking on our own Mount Alba. If, now, because the oldest writers of Greek literature are also the best, Roman authors are to be rated by the same rule of age, then there is nothing we may not say ; the olive has no stone, the nut has no shell and black is white ; we have

The Romans liked old writings just because they were antique.

. . . Non est quod multa loquamur :  
Nil intra est olea, nil extra est in nuce duri,

reached the limit of excellence, and we surpass the Greeks in painting, music and athletics,—which is absurd !

If age improves our writings as it does our wine, I would like to know just how many years it takes to make a poem good. Let me ask this question, "A

This is no criterion of good writing.

Si meliora dies, ut vina, poemata reddit ;  
 Scire velim, chartis pretium quotus arroget annus.

writer who died a hundred years ago, ought to be called ancient and therefore perfect ; or is he merely modern and therefore worthless ? Let us set a limit to this period of ripening and so end all disputes about greatness."

"Well ", you say, " we will call any author who died a hundred years ago a veritable ancient and therefore a classic."

"Very good ", I reply, " then an author who has been dead less than a hundred years by so much as one month or one year, where shall he be put, among the ancient and perfect or among the modern and worthless ?"

"Why surely ", you reply, " he who misses the antiquity of perfection by merely a month, or even by a year, may still be properly ranked among the ancient and great."

" I accept your exception, thank you ; and now, like the man who bared the horse's tail by pulling one hair at a time, I take away this one year from the hundred ; and then I take another, and another ; until the man who calculates greatness with the help of the calendar and says merit comes by a mere multiplication of years, and admires nothing until death has set on it his seal of approval, finds his standards of measurement have diminished to mere zero."

The poet Ennius had sense and force and was called a second Homer, but he was called careless in his writings; everyone reads Naevius now and learns him by heart, just because an old poet is a holy thing. It is still disputed which of these ancients is the best: Pacuvius for his learning, Accius for his noble writing, Afranius because he equals Menander, Plautus because he follows Epicharmus, Caecilius for his seriousness, Terentius for his charm.

Horace gives a list of the Roman classics at that time.

These are the poets whose works the Romans applaud; they crowd the theatre to hear them and hold them to be the only poets from the time of Livius.

Livius Andronicus wrote the first Latin play, A. U. C. 514.

Sometimes the people are right, sometimes they are wrong.

*Interdum volgus rectum videt; est ubi peccat.*

Now, I bear no ill against the poems of these elder writers, of Livy for example, and think they should be suppressed, because they remind me always of my early teacher Orbilius and his fondness for the rod! But it certainly does amaze me that they should be called correct, beautiful, almost perfection, when in fact it is only an occasional apt and well-chosen word and a few tolerable lines which lead one to approve them at all.

I am indignant when I hear a poem condemned, not because it is dull or lacks polish, but simply because it is modern; or when I hear the critics ask us to read the old poets, not with indulgence for their failings, but with reverence and all honor.

60 *Horace : Quintus Horatius Flaccus*

Indignor quicquam reprehendi, non quia crasse  
Compositum inlepideve putetur, sed quia nuper,  
Nec veniam antiquis, sed honorem et praemia posci.

The change in  
literary taste  
and habits.

If the Greeks had in their day despised everything that was new, as some of us do now, what would they have left to become the old, the classic and the well-thumbed to-day?

When her wars were over and Greece began to cultivate the lesser arts and, under a sudden access of wealth, even to cultivate the vices, she turned first to athletic sports, then to horse-racing; then she made

Ut primum positis nugari Graecia bellis  
Coepit et in vitium fortuna labier aequa,  
Nunc athletarum studii, nunc arsit equorum,

sculptures of marble the fashion, then ivories and bronzes; then she gave all her thought to painting, soon to music and next to the drama. She was like a little girl, eager for a new toy, and tired of it as soon as she possessed it. What is there that a man can love, or hate, without change?

Quid placet aut odio est, quod non mutabile credas?

The happy times of peace and prosperous fortunes have always had these effects.

As with the Greeks, so with the Romans. Formerly it was everyone's custom and pleasure to rise early and be ready for business, expound the law to clients, lend money—always on good security—and learn from the elders, and then to pass on to the youth, the art of

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increasing one's income and of cutting down useless expenses.

Now our inconstant people has changed its mind and is concerned with a general zeal for writing. The boys and their austere parents together dine and dictate verses, their heads crowned with garlands. Even I who had sworn to write no more poems am found a greater

The general rage in Rome for writing poetry.

Mutavit mentem populus levis et calet uno  
Scribendi studio: pueri patresque severi  
Fronde comas vincti cenant et carmina dictant.

liar than the Parthians, and waking before the rising sun I call for pen and paper and my desk. The man who does not know how to sail is afraid to navigate a ship; no one dares to give physic to the sick unless he has learned the art. Physicians attempt what belongs to physicians and the weavers weave their fabrics. But we, whether skillful or untaught, scribble poems at random.

. . . Habrotonum aegro  
Non audet nisi qui didicit dare; quod medicorum est  
Promittunt medici; tractant fabrilia fabri:  
Scribimus indocti doctique poemata passim.

Yet the cultivation of poetry brings some benefits, as you shall see.

The soul of the poet has no room for avarice; he loves his verse and this alone; over the loss of goods by fire or the flight of his slave, he laughs. He meditates no wrong against his friend or pupil; he lives on salad

Horace praises the character and high uses of the poet.

and dry bread. Though slow and unfit for war yet he is useful to the state, if you admit this, that great things can be helped by the small. He moulds the tender,

Militiae quamquam piger et malus, utilis urbi,  
Si das hoc, parvis quoque rebus magna iuvare.

lispings speech of the boy and turns away his ear from vulgar words ; later he trains his mind with kindly precepts ; a corrector of envy and anger, he instructs the rising age with great examples ; he solaces the poor and sick. By his eloquent prayers he implores rain from heaven, averts disease, wards off impending dangers, procures peace and a year rich with harvests. By song the high gods, and by song the shades below are appeased.

Caelestis implorat aquas docta prece blandus,  
Avertit morbos, metuenda pericula pellit,  
Impetrat et pacem et locupletem frugibus annum :  
Carmine di superi placantur, carmine manes.

[The Roman drama sprang from the religious festivals in which the ancient swains banded rustic taunts in licentious dialogue. Later, the Grecian drama was brought to Rome, and then appeared the comedies of Plautus, who "treads the stage in a loose and neglectful manner." His aim, says Horace, was to gain applause and fill his purse.]

The  
vulgarization of  
the Roman  
stage.

This ambition to please the audience discourages and deters from the stage even bold poets. The people, who are in the majority in numbers though lacking in worth and dignity, unlearned, dull, constantly stand

ready to fight the better portion of the audience. They hiss at those who disagree with them. In the middle of a good play they call for the bears and the gladiators,

Saepe etiam audacem fugat hoc terretque poetam,  
Quod numero plures, virtute et honore minores,  
Indocti stolidique et depugnare parati,  
Si discordet eques, media inter carmina poscunt  
Aut ursum aut pugiles: his nam plebecula gaudet.

for these delight the masses. For four hours or more the curtain is let down and the play stands still, while the squadrons of horses and the troops of footmen parade, kings are dragged in triumph, chariots and litters, carriages and ships are hurried along, and the ivory pageant of Corinth is borne in procession. Democritus would have laughed to see the vulgar crowd staring at the camels and white elephants, and he would have thought the people a greater show than the spectacle itself. As for the authors of these shows he would have said they were telling their story to a deaf ass, for what lungs could not bray the noise with which our theatres ring.

Vaudeville is preferred by the Romans.

But now, lest you perhaps think I am maligning those who write these things, and successfully, while I decline to do it, pray hear my excuse. I think that that poet is master of his art who by means of skilful words alone stirs my soul, grieves it, soothes it, fills it with his imagined terrors, and like a magician places me now in Thebes, now in Athens.

Therefore vouchsafe, Caesar, some small regard for



those poets who prefer to trust themselves to the reader of their books rather than risk the disdain of insolent spectators. In this way you will fill your Apollonian library with choice books and give poets courage to frequent with greater zeal the green retreats of Helicon.

Verum age et his, qui se lectori credere malunt  
 Quam spectatoris fastidia ferre superbi,  
 Curam redde brevem, si munus Apolline dignum  
 Vis complere libris et vatibus addere calcar,  
 Ut studio maiore petant Helicon virentem.

It is worth while, to inquire what sort of men shall be the guardians of your virtue so signalized in peace and war,—a task too sacred for unworthy poets.

Sed tamen est operae pretium cognoscere, qualis  
 Aedituos habeat belli spectata domique  
 Virtus, indigno non committenda poetae.

Your favorite writers, Virgil and Varius, do not reflect dishonor on your judgment, nor on the bounty which, with many praises from the giver, they have received. The features of illustrious men are not better expressed in statues of brass than are their manners and minds by the work of the poet.

If I had the capacity myself, I would not choose to write these letters, which creep along the ground, rather than attempt to describe your glorious deeds, the countries you have seen, the rivers crossed, the forts built on the mountains, the barbarous kingdoms subdued, the wars under your influence brought to an end all over



the world, the temple of Janus closed, and Rome, under your sway, become the dread of the Parthian.

. . . . . Nec sermones ego mallem  
Repentis per humum quam res componere gestas,  
Terrarumque situs et flumina dicere et arces  
Montibus impositas et barbara regna tuisque  
Auspiciis totum confecta duella per orbem,  
Claustraque custodem pacis cohibentia Ianum  
Et formidatam Parthis te principe Romam,

For neither would your majesty, great prince, receive my small songs nor will my modesty attempt a theme for which I have not the strength. Officious zeal is troublesome to him to whom it is indiscreetly addressed, especially when it takes the form of poetic verse. I have no desire to be disgraced by issuing paltry works, lest when I receive a recompense, I be put to the blush, and later packed up with my poem in an open box, I be carried to the street where drugs and perfumes and pepper are sold and whatever else is wrapped up in useless scribblings.

Ne rubeam pingui donatus munere et una  
Cum scriptore meo capsula porrectus aperta  
Deferar in vicum vendentem tus et odores  
Et piper et quicquid chartis amicitur ineptis.

Horace declines to write the epic of Caesar's achievements.

## TO JULIUS FLORUS

### THE SECOND LETTER OF THE SECOND BOOK

Julius Florus to whom this letter is addressed is the same young man to whom Horace wrote Epistle I. 3. a few years before. Florus was again away from Rome in the train of Tiberius Nero. It appears that before leaving he had asked Horace to send him letters and verses. Horace begins the present Epistle with very elaborate excuses for not having written as requested. He tells a story and applies it, with a sketch of his own career. The burden of the latter part of the letter is the sad state of things among the versemakers of Rome. Horace says he is tired of contemporary poets and poetry.

The excellent Davidson says: "This is none of his meanest pieces; it is full of excellent precepts for Poetry and Morality and all interspersed with judicious criticism and the finest Turns of Satire."

Flore, bono claroque fidelis amice Neroni,

My dear Florus, friend and confidant of the brave and famous Tiberius :

Horace begins  
his excuses.

Suppose a dealer wished to sell you a slave born in some Italian town, and should address you thus :

He imitates the  
patter of the  
slave dealers.

" This young man is of fair complexion and without a flaw from head to foot. You can have him for four hundred dollars. He is a household slave, quick to the nod of his master ; he knows a little Greek, is apt at all the Arts, and you can mould him as you would soft clay ; he can sing well enough to divert you at the

table. I know that over-praise of merchandise which one wishes to sell lessens confidence in the seller ; but I am not pressed to sell ; though poor I am not in debt. None of the other dealers would make you this offer, and I shall take care not to do this favor to anyone but you. As to his faults, he has once gone amiss ; and as was natural he hid himself under the stairs for fear of the lash.

" Give me the money, unless you hesitate on account of this small defect, concerning which I do not guarantee him."

If you buy the slave after this, the dealer will get his price and will not fear that he may have to return it.

If a slave were guaranteed and the buyer found him faulty, the sale could be revoked.

Now, such is the situation between you and me. You bought a faulty slave, knowing the conditions and the law ; nevertheless, you pursue the dealer and annoy him with an unjust suit. When you left home I told you I was an indolent man, not good at the duties of friendship, and that you ought not to be angry if no letter from me ever came to you. But how has this warning helped me if in spite of it you do not notice my protest? You complain that I have not sent you the verses I promised.

Listen: A Soldier of Lucullus's Army, having endured many Hardships to get together a little Money, happened to be robbed of it to a Penny, as he lay quite fatigued snoring in the Night. Whereupon, like a raging Wolf fierce with famine, angered against

The Story of the Soldier.

both himself and the Enemy, he drove one of the royal Garrisons from a Post which, as they say, was very strongly fortified, and richly stored with Booty. Having signalized himself by this Action, he is crown'd with Rewards of Honour, and receives four hundred dollars besides.

It happened about this time, that his General, having a mind to batter down some Fort or other, began to address the same Soldier, in terms that might have inspired even a Coward with Courage: "Go", Said he, "my Champion, where your Valor calls you; go in a happy hour, to reap the ample Recompense of Merit. —Why do you demur" ?

To which he made this shrewd and candid reply:

" Let him who has lost his purse, my General, let him go on the attack you design."

" Ibit.

Ibit eo quo vis qui zonam perdidit "

Horace applies  
the story to  
himself.

It was my lot to be educated at Rome and to be taught from Homer how much angry Achilles hurt the cause of the Greeks. Kind Athens added a little to my learning so that I could perhaps distinguish the straight from the crooked and feel the desire to seek after truth in the groves of Academus. But the troublous times removed me from this pleasant spot and the tide of Civil War bore me to arms, without experience and no match for the sinews of Augustus Caesar. After the battle of Philippi had left me humiliated and

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with clipped wings, lacking in house and lands, the compulsion of poverty led me to make verses. But now, having more than is needed, what medicines could ever sufficiently purge me of madness if I did not think it better to sleep than to write poetry?

The advancing years rob us of everything; they have taken from me jests, love, banquets and the sports; and now they proceed to take from me my poetry.

Horace complains that he cannot write verses now.

Eripuere iocos, venerem, convivia, ludum;  
Tendunt extorquere poemata: quid faciam vis?

What then would you have me do? And what sort of verses shall I write? for not all praise and like the same kind. You are fond of the ode, the next one loves the iambics; another the virulent wit of Bion's satires. If I have three guests they will scarcely agree about what food I shall give and what withhold; for what one forbids another commands, and what one likes is sour and distasteful to the other two.

Besides, do you think I can write poems in Rome amid so many cares and fatigues? One begs me to go as his surety; another asks that, leaving all my own concerns, I go and listen to his writings. The one lives at the Quirinal, the other at the end of Aventinus, truly a commodious distance, yet each one must be seen!

The annoyances of living in the city of Rome.

You may say that the streets are free and nothing prevents my composing on the way. But behold! the

panting builder hurries along with his mules and porters ; the creaking machine lifts aloft a stone or a huge beam ; dreary funerals dispute the way with unwieldy drays ; here runs a mad dog ; and here a sow all over mire rushes by.

Go now and meditate over your canorous verses !

*I nunc et versus tecum meditare canoros !*

The tribe of poets loves the groves and it flees the cities ; they are true clients of Bacchus, who delights in sleep and shade.

*Scriptorum chorus omnis amat nemus et fugit urbem,  
Rite cliens Bacchi somno gaudentis et umbra :*

Would you have me sing amid this ceaseless uproar and try here to follow along the almost effaced paths of the Ancients ?

If a man of genius, who has chosen for his retreat quiet Athens, who has spent seven years in study and has grown old in books and cares, goes out into the streets of that city meditating and as silent as a statue, he thereby makes the people shake with laughter. If they mock at this old dreamer in Athens, how can you ask me to play the same part in Rome, or think that amid the billows and commotions of the city I am able to connect words that will awake the sound of the lyre ?

The Mutual  
Admiration of  
the Augustan  
poets.

There were at Rome two brothers, a rhetorician and a lawyer ; they held such opinions of each other that they bestowed on each other pompous eulogiums.

The lawyer called the rhetorician a second Gracchus, and the rhetorician called the lawyer another Mucius. How much less does this kind of silliness affect our excitable poets?

Caius Gracchus was a famous orator; there were several Mucii who were eminent lawyers.

I write odes, another elegies, and if we can believe each other they are pieces wonderful to behold, works of art, burnished by the nine Muses!

"Mirabile visu  
Caelatumque novem Musis opus!"

Follow us in our gathering and see with what a pompous pose we look upon the Temple of Apollo reserved for Roman poets! Then, if you have leisure, just take the trouble to listen to that which we are reading to each other, for which we give each other laurel crowns! Like a pair of Samnite Gladiators, fencing in a slow duel at supper time, we fight each other; first we are beaten, then we beat the enemy in our most equal combat. I come out an Alcaeus at his hands; and he at mine, becomes,—what do you suppose?—nothing less than Callimachus! or, if he asks more, I call him a Mimnermus, and he feels greater with this rare title.

The Gladiators fenced to entertain the guests.

I used to endure much while I was myself writing in order to pacify this passionate race of poets; I too submissively sought the applause of the people; but now, having finished my poetic career and recovered my senses, I can boldly stop my ears to the reciters.

These Greek poets were especially imitated by the Latins

It was the custom of poets to recite their verses to friends and admirers.

People laugh at those who write verses; but the



writers are happy and greatly pleased with themselves. If the critic is silent, the happy creatures are just as pleased over what they think the critic has said.

Ridentur mala qui componunt carmina ; verum  
Gaudent scribentes et se venerantur et ultro,  
Si taceas, laudant quidquid scripsere beati.

How a genuine  
poet will write,  
using his talent  
to enrich the  
Latin tongue.

But if one wishes to write a genuine poem, he will assume the spirit of an honest critic ; he will dare to remove all words which are lacking in clearness, or have little force. He will happily revive other words which have been long dead for the people, and will bring to light proper and forcible terms which were in use at the time of Cæthegus and Cato, but are now lost in the dust and ruin of the years. He will also adopt new words, as his need requires ; forcible and clear, like a pure and limpid stream, he will pour his treasure out and enrich Latium with a more copious language ; he will prune the luxuriant and polish the rough with salutary art. He will seem to write with the utmost ease, even while he labors most ; like a dancer who skilfully plays now the part of a satyr, now that of a clumsy Cyclops.

But who would be a poet as things are now ? I would myself rather be accounted a foolish and dull writer, while my follies please me or at least escape my notice, than be wise and have to suffer for it.

Praetulerim scriptor delirus inersque videri,  
Dum mea delectent mala me vel denique fallant,  
Quam sapere et ringi.



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There lived at Argos one of no mean rank, who used to fancy that he was listening to admirable tragic actors; he would sit, happy and applauding, in the empty theatre. Yet he correctly discharged all the duties of life; was an excellent neighbor, an admirable friend and civil to his wife; could command himself so far as to forgive his servants, and was not quite a madman though the seal of a bottle were broken; and he could avoid walking against a rock or into an open well. His relations, with much labor and care, cured him, expelling the disease and bile by doses of pure hellebore. But, returned to his senses, he straightway says, "By Pollux, my friends, you have been not my deliverers, but the death of me, for you have robbed me of my pleasure, and violently taken from me my soul's dearest illusion!"

The story of the happy lunatic.

"Pol, me occidistis, amici,  
Non servastis", ait, "cui sic extorta voluptas  
Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus error."

After all, the best course is to lay aside trifles, leave puerile things to the children for whom they are proper, and not try to modulate words to the Latin lyre; but rather learn to live wisely and follow the numbers and measures of true life.

Horace thinks it better to give up poetry and study the philosophy of life.

*Sed verae numerosque modosque ediscere vitae.*

It is with this purpose that, having communed with myself upon them, I make the following reflections:

"If you found that you had a thirst which no amount

of water would quench, you would consult a physician. If, however, you found that you had such a thirst for riches that the more you had the more you wanted, would you dare to confess it to any one?

He makes certain reflections.

If any herb or root that had been recommended did not relieve your wound, you surely would refuse to continue to use it.

Now, you have heard certain philosophers say that when the Gods bestow riches upon one, they also take away folly. Yet, although you are yourself no wiser since you became rich, do you still believe this philosophy? Or, if riches have indeed made you prudent and a little less covetous and timid, would you not still blush if you knew there was in the world a man more avaricious than yourself?

Horace's views on poetry are very idealistic and are surely no addition to economics.

If that be your property which you have bought and paid for, and if there are some things, as lawyers say, to which possession gives claim, then the field that feeds you is your own; and the steward of *Orbius* who tills the soil finds in you his real master. For, you give him money, he brings you the products: grapes, chickens, eggs, wine; you thus really little by little buy the farm!

But in reality can we call anything the property of a man which in a moment of fleeting time, by free grant or sale, by violence, or last of all, by death, may become changed, and come under a new owner? Thus, since the perpetual possession is given to none,

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but the heir of one crowds close upon the heir of another, like wave impelling wave, what do houses, what do lands avail? of what the Lucanian pastures, joined to those of Calabria, since death, who is not to be bribed by gold, mows down the great with the small?

Gems, marble, ivory, Tuscan statues, pictures, silver plate, robes dyed with Getulian purple; some there are who do not have these things, and some who do not care for them. Of two brothers why does one

The different tastes of man.

Gemmas, marmor, ebur, Tyrrhena sigilla, tabellas,  
Argentum, vestes Gaetulo murice tinctas  
Sunt qui non habeant, est qui non curat habere.

prefer idleness, sports and fine perfumes to the revenues of Herod's palmtree groves? Why is the other, tho' rich, still restless, drudging from morning till evening

The natural temperament determines this variety of tastes.

Dives et importunus ad umbram lucis ab ortu  
Silvestrem flammis et ferro mitiget agrum,

in improving his estate? Our genius alone knows the answer, that companion who controls our natal star,

Scit Genius, natale comes qui temperat astrum,  
the god of our human nature, mortal like ourselves, varying in feature, fair or false.

For me, I'll freely use and take from my moderate store as much as my needs demand without fearing what my heir thinks of me, when he finds I have bequeathed him no more than was given me. And yet,

Horace describes his ideal of life.

Horace  
describes his  
ideal of life.

at the same time, I will wish to show how a plain and yet a merry man differs from a spendthrift debauchee ; and a thrifty man from a miser : for there is a difference between profusely squandering money and neither spending it with a grudge, nor laboring to get more ; I will, as formerly in Minerva's holidays when a boy, enjoy eagerly the exiguous and pleasant hours.

Let sordid poverty be put far away ; then whether I sail in a large or small vessel, I will voyage quietly over even seas, not borne with swelling sails by the prosperous northern winds, or tossed through life by the adverse south : in strength, genius, figure, virtue, station, fortune, tho' the last of the first, still I am before the last.

He questions  
Florus about  
his other faults.

You are free from avarice, 'tis well. But let me ask you, have other vices left you as well as this ? Is your soul clear of vain ambition ? Is it clear of fear of death and angry passions ? Can you laugh at dreams, magic terrors, miracles, sorceresses, goblins of the night, and Thessalian prodigies ? Do you count your birthdays with a grateful mind ? Are you tender and forgiving to your friends ? Do you grow milder and better as age comes on ? What avails it you to have but one out of your many thorns of evil pulled out ? And, finally, if you cannot live with decorum, make way for those who have learned the lesson. You have played, you have eaten, you have drank your fill ; it is high time, perhaps, for you to walk off ; lest, having

He cautions  
against various  
ignoble  
weaknesses.

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drunk more than your share, youth, which plays the  
wanton with better grace, jeer and shove you off the  
stage.

Tempus abire tibi est, ne potum largius aequo  
Rideat et pulset lasciva decentius aetas.

## LETTER TO THE PISOS, ON THE ART OF POETRY

### THE THIRD LETTER OF THE SECOND BOOK

Writing verses was an amusement or occupation much affected by the leisure class of Augustan times, and Horace's Art of Poetry is a letter giving advice to the Piso family as to the making of poetry and the construction of plays. It is not a systematic or complete treatise and it touches on no deep problems of aesthetics or technique. Indeed it begins and ends with an Horatian pleasantry. The subject does not appeal to a modern reader and no one now reads the poem if he can help himself.

Yet it is one of the famous pieces of literature, and has been perhaps the most quoted and commented upon of all his epistles. It was imitated by Boileau, and it is said to have been a most important factor in the forming of French prose. The letter has still many passages and lines that stimulate and please the reader. Horace even in talking shop is never dull if one can get some feeling for his extraordinary and ingenious talent in the use of aptest words for aptest things. The epistle is interesting also because he gives us here his views of the drama, and criticizes the stage of Augustan times in a way which would now fit the shows of a great American city.

It is said by Marcilus that Augustus organized an Academy in Rome consisting of twenty poets, orators and learned men, and gave them the Temple and Library of Apollo in which to meet. Horace, we are told composed this *Ars* to give expression to the views of these immortals, "producing thereby one of the most precious monuments of antiquity." There is considerable doubt about this Academy, however, and there are probably monuments of antiquity more precious than this letter to the Pisos. Parts of it are surely without interest or value today, except as

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specimens of classic Latin. Therefore we present only portions of the letter.

The four ages of man, the criticisms of the drama at Rome, B. C. 40, the praise of the Poet as a Priest and Teacher, are some of the parts which we select and commend to the Twentieth Century reader; and we make our apologies to the Shade of Horace for appearing to mutilate and "feature" a work of his presumably careful hours. Yet he may forgive us for trying to bring about that time of which he speaks in addressing his book:

Cum tibi sol tepidus plures admoverit aures.

"When the temperate sun shall collect for you more hearers."

It is generally believed that the *Ars Poetica* was one of Horace's latest works and was written shortly before he died. Some are of the opinion that it was left unfinished and was published posthumously.

Other very good authority (Wilkin) says that it was written about the time of the *Epistles* of the first Book (B. C. 20) when he was forty-five.

Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam  
lungere si velit et varias indicere plumas

If a painter try to join the neck of a horse to the body of a man, or to put various kinds of feathers on miscellaneous assembled limbs; to make, for example, a woman, beautiful to the waist, end in the tail of an ugly fish, would you not smile as you looked at the result?

Horace argues for unity and simplicity.

Believe me, dear Piso, a book will be very much like such a picture, if the ideas are confused and like the night-mares of a sick man, have neither beginning, or end in a coherent form.

And against the sensational.

It often happens in serious and weighty productions that one or two brilliant patches which stand out widely from the rest are inserted; as when the grove and



Inceptis gravibus plerumque et maga proressis  
 Purpureus, late qui splendeat, unus et alter  
 Adsuitur pannus,

altar of Diana are described, or " The winding current of a stream flowing through pleasant fields " or the glories of the river Rhine, and those of the watery bow. It is no place for these things. One may be able to paint a cypress well, but what use is that if you are hired to paint a ship-wrecked sailor swimming in the waves for the shore. In fine, whatever subject you choose let it be treated simply and harmoniously.

"To paint a cypress" was a proverbial expression for making some inharmonious ornamentation.

Choose a subject suited to your ability.

Denique sit quidvis simplex dumtaxat et unum.

You who write should choose a subject proper to your strength and consider always what your shoulders will fail to bear and what they can sustain. If your chosen subject is suited to your ability there will be no lack of spirit or effectiveness.

This if I am not mistaken forms the excellence and beauty of poetic method; that the poet says just now what should just now be said, that he holds back the pressure of his thoughts till he can select the right and reject the wrong.

The use of apt words.

You must be delicate and cautious in the choice of words, but you will elevate your style if by a happy conjunction you give an old word a new meaning.

The use of new words.

It has been and always will be permitted to coin a word if it is formed according to prevalent usage.



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Most of us poets are misled by insistence upon our idea of what is right. I try to be brief and I become obscure; aiming at smoothness, we lose in vigor and spirit; attempting the sublime, we become turgid. Timid of the storm, we crawl along the ground. Thus if one

Decipimur specie recti: brevis esse laboro,  
Obscurus fio; sectantem levia nervi  
Deficiunt animique; professus grandia turget;  
Serpit humi tutus nimium timidusque procellae;

lacks art, the over careful avoidance of one fault leads to another.

In vitium ducit culpa fuga, si caret arte.

Homer showed in what measures the deeds of kings and generals and the stories of disastrous wars are to be written. The first strains of plaintive poetry were appropriated to the unequal pentameters of the elegy.

The muse gave to the lyre power to celebrate the gods, the victorious fighter and the horse first in the race, the passions of youth and the joys of wine.

Listen now to what I and the public with me require as qualifications for the writing of plays. If you would have the audience hear you, applaud till the curtain fall, and sit till the actor pronounce the epilogue; you must note well the temper of each age, and assign the proper qualities to persons of varying character and years.

The boy, who has just learned how to form words The boy. and accents and walk with a firm tread, loves to be

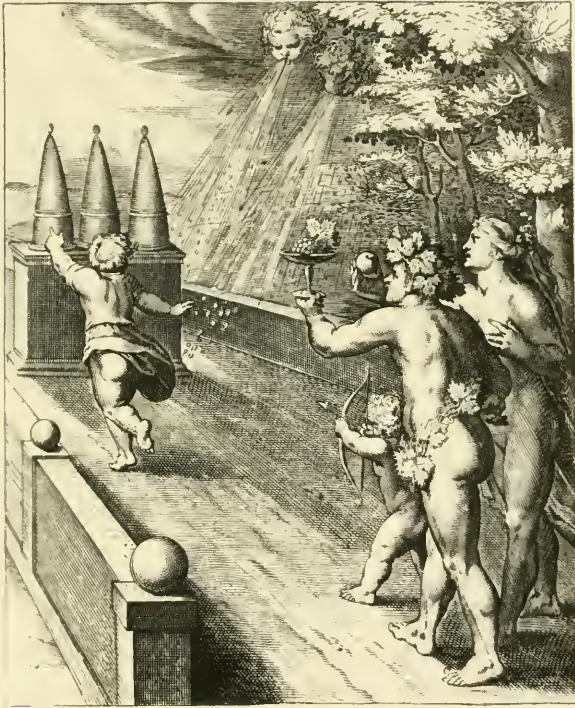
matched at play with his fellows, is easily provoked, or appeased, and changes every hour.

The youth. The beardless youth, having at last got rid of his guardian, is happy with his horses and dogs, and in the sports of the sunny campus ; his mind, like wax, is soft and easy to be formed to vice, froward to his reprovers, slow in providing for the needs of life, lavish of his money, high-spirited, amorous, and hasty in abandoning the objects of his love.

Inerbis iuvenis, tandem custode remoto  
Gaudet equis canibusque et aprici gramine campi,  
Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper,  
Utilium tardus provisor, prodigus aeris,  
Sublimis cupidusque et amata relinquere pernix.

The man. Our inclinations changing with our years, the temper of middle life is eager in pursuit of riches, and seeks to multiply friends, is ambitious of honour, and cautious of venturing on an action which soon might need to be undone.

Old age. Many infirmities beset old age ; either because an old man is too anxious for gain, and yet pinches himself, and is afraid to use his money ; or because he does everything with a chilled and listless spirit, being dilatory, languid in hope, remiss, greedy of a longer life, peevish, apt to repine, praising ever the former days when he was a boy, censuring and forever correcting those who are younger than himself. Our flowing years bring along with them many advantages, many our ebbing years take away.



Qui studet optatam cursu contingere metam,  
Multa tulit fecitque puer, sudavit et alsit,  
Abstinit Venere et vino ;

Ars Poetica

He who is eager in the race to reach the wished-for goal,  
endures and practices much ; he has known heat and sweat  
and has abstained from Venus and wine.



The part therefore, which belongs to old age may not be ascribed to the youth; nor that of manhood to the boy; we must never wander from what is suitable and akin to each period.

An action is either represented on the stage, or is related to have happened. The things that enter by the ear affect the mind less than those which fall under the faithful scrutiny of the eyes, when the spectator sees

Stage  
technique.

Segnius iritant animos demissa per aurem  
Quam quae sunt oculis subiecta fidelibus et quae  
Ipse sibi tradit spectator :

for himself. You must not however, show upon the stage things which are more fit to be acted behind the scenes; and you should remove many actions from view which an eloquent actor will soon relate to his audience. Do not let Medea butcher her sons in the presence of the spectators; or impious Atreus cook human flesh upon the stage; nor let Progne be transformed into a bird, or Cadmus into a serpent. Whatever of this kind you set before me, I can not believe and so I hate it.

A play, which would be in demand, and after one representation be called for again, should not be shorter nor longer than five acts. Nor let a god be introduced, unless a puzzling difficulty occurs worthy a god to unravel; nor let there be more than three speakers in one scene.

\* \* \* \* \*

He tells young  
 Piso there can  
     be no  
 mediocrity in  
     poetry.

O thou first-born of the hopeful youths, though you, Piso, have been trained in judgment by your father's voice, and are yourself wise; yet remember this which I impress upon you: In some professions mediocrity and tolerable endowments may properly be allowed: an average lawyer for example, or advocate at the bar is far from having the talent of eloquent Messala, or the knowledge of Cassellius Aulus; yet he may be held in esteem: but not gods, or men, give any indulgence to middling poets; for poetry, designed and invented by nature for improving our minds, if it comes short ever so little of the top, must sink to the bottom.

He who cannot fence refrains from the contests of the Campus Martius; and he who is unskilful with the ball, or quoit, or hoop, does not meddle with them, lest the ring of onlookers raise a laugh against him: but he who knows nothing of poetry, still dares compose. Why not? He is freeborn and a gentleman; above all, possessed of an equestrian estate, and clear of every vice!

You will not write or do anything, Minerva unwilling; you have intelligence and judgment; yet if you ever should write let Moetius, a good judge, your father and me read it; and keep it for nine years with your papers at home. You can then alter and correct it; but the word once sent out can never return.

Keep your  
 poems nine  
 years before  
 you publish  
     them.

Sound judgment is the ground and source of writing well. The Socratic Dialogues will direct you in the



choice of a subject ; and words will freely come when the subject is well digested. The writer who has learned what he owes to his country and to his friends ; with what affection a parent, a brother, a stranger are to be loved ; what is the duty of a senator, what of a judge ; what the part of a general sent forth to war ; such a man will surely know how to do justice to all his characters.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was on the Greeks that the Muse conferred her best gifts, inventive genius, a vigorous and polished style ; in regard to these things they were sincerely covetous of honest fame. Among us Romans there are no such generous ideals. Our Roman youth are taught the art of gaining money ; they learn by long computations how to divide a pound into a hundred parts. " Say, Son of Albinus, if from five ounces one ounce be subtracted, what remains ? " If you answer : " Four ounces." " Well said, my boy ! you will soon be able to manage an estate." " Add an ounce, what sum will it make ? " " Six ounces."

When this cankering rust and itching after wealth affects their minds, can one expect that our authors will compose verses worthy to live and to be preserved in book-cases of polished cypress ?

Whether a praiseworthy poem is the product of nature or of art has been made a question. For my part, I do not see how study without a rich poetic

Whether  
poetry is the  
gift of nature or  
of art.

talent, or how genius, uncultivated by art and study can avail : So much does the one need the other's aid, and amicably conspire to the same end. He who strives to win the valued goal by running, has done and suffered much when young : he has sweated and been pinched with cold and has abstained from women and wine. He who plays the Pythian airs first studied his art and was subject under a master. This study is necessary in every other art, but now it is enough, says the Roman, to tell the world : " I compose wonderful poems, a plague take the hindmost ; I should think it a disgrace indeed to be left behind, and own myself ignorant of an art I have not learned."

Horace  
proclaims the  
nobility of his  
art. It was at  
first a Sacred  
profession.

Orpheus, the divine poet, interpreter of the gods, reclaim'd uncivilized men from their combats and their inhuman food. He is said to have tamed the tigers and furious lions. Amphion, builder of the Theban Wall, we are told moved the rocks by the music of his lyre, and by the soft allurements of his song led them wherever he wished. In former ages the poet's wisdom sought to distinguish public from private good ; things sacred from things profane, to forbid the promiscuous embrace, to give laws to the married state ; plan the cities and compile the laws. So honor and a name came to divine poets and their works. After them illustrious Homer and Tyrtæus by their poetry stirred heroic souls to the feats of war. In songs were oracles delivered ; the way of life was shown ; the favor of kings was asked in



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Pierian strains ; by poetry games were introduced and thus a limit put to the labors of the day.

These things I mention, lest you may not be ashamed of the Muse who tunes the lyre, and of Apollo, the god of song.

Ne forte pudori  
Sit tibi Musa lyrae sollers et cantor Apollo.













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